

News Release



Monterey Bay
Air Resources District

serving Monterey, San Benito, and Santa Cruz counties

24580 Silver Cloud Court, Monterey, California 93940

PH: 831/647-9411 FAX 831/647-8501

WILDFIRE AIR QUALITY ADVISORY

Monterey, California – August 24, 2018

Smoke transported from the massive wildfires currently burning in Northern California, Washington, Oregon and British Columbia have degraded air quality throughout Monterey, San Benito, and Santa Cruz counties, causing the concentration of smoke to reach levels of the Air Quality Index (AQI) that are UNHEALTHY FOR SENSITIVE GROUPS in most areas in the region and as high as UNHEALTHY in some areas. Conditions are subject to change depending on wind and fire activity. As a result, air quality will be variable and unpredictable. The Air District will continue to follow the situation and issue advisories when appropriate.

The Monterey Bay Air Resources District tracks real time air quality in our region. Updates on the current air quality forecast can be found on the Air District website at: <http://mbard.org/air-quality/>.

If you are being impacted by smoke, consider these guidelines:

- **When the concentration of smoke has reached UNHEALTHY levels of the AQI, residents should limit their activity by staying indoors with the doors and windows closed to avoid breathing smoke. You may want to check with your health care provider to make sure it's not necessary for you to leave the area.**
- Use common sense. If it looks smoky outside, it's probably not a good time to go for a run. And it's probably not a good time for your children to play outdoors.
- Help lower inside particle levels inside your home. When smoke levels are high, avoid using anything that burns, such as wood fireplaces, gas logs, gas stoves – even candles. Don't vacuum as that stirs up particles already inside your home. And don't smoke. That puts even more pollution in your lungs, and in the lungs of people around you.
- We are asking residents to avoid adding more pollution to the air by limiting activities such as wood burning, driving, lawn mowing, and leaf blowing.

Health Effects of Smoke:

Smoke is made up of a complex mixture of gases and fine particles produced when wood and other organic matter burn. The biggest health threat from smoke comes from fine particles. **These fine particles are especially harmful to the very young, very old, and to people with heart and lung disease.**

If you have further questions, information about the health effects of wildfire smoke can be found on the EPA website: <http://www.airnow.gov/index.cfm?action=smoke.index>.

Richard A. Stedman
Air Pollution Control Officer