



# Tuolumne County Public Health Department

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## **A Joint Message on Wildfire Smoke Impacts from the Tuolumne County Public Health Department and the Air Pollution Control District**

The Tuolumne County Public Health Department and the Air Pollution Control District are issuing a joint public health and air quality advisory to notify the public of poor air quality conditions due to the smoke emanating from the Oak Fire. Our agencies would like to remind the public that wildfire smoke can be hazardous to a person's health. Tuolumne County along with several counties in the area, are experiencing air quality conditions that range from moderate to very unhealthy dependent on the time of day and where you reside.

While all people may experience varying degrees of symptoms due to exposure of smoke, the health risk to an individual depends on age, health status, and length of exposure. For the young and elderly or those with underlying health conditions, it is strongly advised that protective measures be taken to minimize exposure to wildfire smoke. Anyone experiencing serious symptoms should contact their health care provider or the emergency department.

The following are recommendations to reduce your exposure to smoke:

- Limit unnecessary outdoor activities when possible during poor quality air conditions.
- Individuals with long term health conditions like asthma, lung or heart disease should make sure that they have a supply of medications on hand and are following their caregivers' instructions.
- Elderly and very young children should limit their outdoor activities when local air quality is "unhealthy for sensitive groups" (visibility less than 5 miles).
- Signs that the smoke may be bothering you include coughing, scratchy throat, irritated sinuses, shortness of breath, stinging eyes or runny nose. Sometimes symptoms may even include chest pain or headaches. Consult your caregiver for worsening symptoms.
- If you are advised to stay indoors, keep indoor air as clean as possible. Keep windows and doors closed unless it is extremely hot outside. Run an air conditioner if you have one, but keep the fresh-air intake closed and the filter clean to prevent outdoor smoke from getting inside. If you do not have an air conditioner and it is too warm to stay inside with the windows closed, seek shelter elsewhere if possible. Consider a high-efficiency particulate air (HEPA) filter to reduce breathing problems. Room air cleaners, which utilize a HEPA filter, may reduce the number of irritating fine particles in indoor air.
- Do not add to indoor pollution. Smoking, vacuuming, fireplace, or lighting candles are not advised due to the buildup of particulate matter into the air.
- Check on your loved ones.

For more information, visit <https://www.cdc.gov/nceh/features/wildfires/index.html>

View the air quality map here: <https://map.purpleair.com/1/mAQI/a10/p604800/cC0#10.24/37.978/-120.3747>

You can also contact the Tuolumne County Public Health Department at 533-7401, or the Air Pollution Control District at 533-5693, or visit our websites: <https://www.tuolumnecounty.ca.gov/364/Air-Pollution-Control-District> or <https://www.tuolumnecounty.ca.gov/250/Public-Health#>