



Tuolumne County Public Health Department

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Air Quality Advisory from Tuolumne County Public Health and the Tuolumne County Air Pollution Control District

SONORA, Calif. September 3, 2025- Tuolumne County Public Health and the Tuolumne County Air Pollution Control District are issuing a joint air quality advisory through Friday, September 5, 2025, to notify the public of the potential for poor air quality conditions from smoke from the TCU September Lightning Complex fires in Tuolumne County.

Wildfire smoke may be intermittent and affect different areas of Tuolumne County with elevated levels of particulate matter dependent upon wind direction. Poor air quality can have negative health impacts, particularly for sensitive groups and when exposure is prolonged.

Information on air quality and smoke can be found AirNow's Fire and Smoke webpage at <https://fire.airnow.gov> which shows data from permanent and temporary particulate monitors along with low-cost sensors; <https://www2.purpleair.com/> will show daily/hourly air quality forecasts.

Smoke contains very tiny particles that can be inhaled deep into the lungs. While all people may experience varying degrees of symptoms, more sensitive individuals - such as the young, aged and those with respiratory conditions - are at greatest risk of experiencing serious symptoms. Symptoms may include, but are not limited to, coughing, watery and itchy eyes, headache, scratchy throat, and difficulty in breathing.

If you can see or smell smoke, avoid all unnecessary outdoor activities, especially if you are in an area where visibility is greatly reduced.

Here are recommended ways to reduce your smoke exposure:

- Stay indoors with the windows and doors closed; if possible, run the air conditioner on the "recirculation" setting
- Limit outdoor physical activity
- Leave the smoke-impacted areas if possible until conditions improve
- Reduce unnecessary driving. If traveling through smoke-impacted areas, be sure that your vehicle's ventilation system is on recirculate
- Non-HEPA paper face mask filters and bandana-type face coverings are not capable of filtering out extra fine smoke particulates which are much smaller in size. Therefore, they will not be helpful in protecting individuals from smoke-related impacts. Information on the use of masks and face coverings during smoke impacts can be found [here](#).

Anyone experiencing serious symptoms due to smoke should contact a health professional. Persons who have a respiratory-related illness may also wish to consult their health care provider if they are experiencing smoke exposure. Air quality can change rapidly at different times during the day due to wind shifts; monitor smoke throughout the day and make outdoor plans accordingly.

Guides for schools and general health information are attached.

Recommendations for Schools and Others Responsible for Children during a Wildfire Smoke Event

Health Recommendations for Schools, Coaches, and Event Coordinators regarding student exposure to fine particles (smoke and dust) air pollution

Air Quality Conditions					
→Check current air quality first at www.airnow.gov/index.cfm?action=topics.smoke_wildfires then use this chart.					
Activity	GOOD	MODERATE	UNHEALTHY FOR SENSITIVE GROUPS (USG)	UNHEALTHY	VERY UNHEALTHY / HAZARDOUS
	(AQI : 0-50)	(AQI: 51-100)	(AQI: 101-150)	(AQI: 151-200)	(AQI: 201-300)
	Visibility* 11+	Visibility 6-10 miles	Visibility 3-5 miles	Visibility 1.5 - 2.75	Visibility < 1.25
Recess (15 min)	No restrictions	No restrictions, but allow students with asthma or other respiratory problems to stay indoors	Keep children with asthma, respiratory infection, and heart or lung disease indoors. Make indoor space available for all children	Keep children indoors and activity levels light.	Keep all children indoors and activity levels light.
P.E. (1 hour)	No restrictions	Monitor children with asthma or other respiratory problems, limit their vigorous activities and increase rest periods	Limit to light outdoor activities. Allow any student to stay indoors if going outside might affect their health. Keep children with asthma, respiratory infection, and heart or lung disease indoors. Limit these children to moderate activities.	Conduct P.E. indoors. Limit children to light activities.	Keep all children indoors and activity levels light.
Scheduled Sporting Events & Practices	No restrictions	Monitor children with asthma or other respiratory problems, limit their vigorous activities and increase rest periods	Consider moving the event indoors. Increase rest periods and substitutions to allow for lower breathing rates. Children with asthma, respiratory infection, and heart or lung disease should play indoors.	Consider canceling, rescheduling, or relocating event to an area of good air quality, if this can be done without much transit through areas with poor air quality	Consider canceling, rescheduling, or relocating event to an area of good air quality, if this can be done without much transit through areas with poor air quality

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*Asthma action plans should be followed at all times. When air quality is diminished, individuals should pay special attention to their Asthma Action Plan

→**Light activities:** walking slowly carrying school books, hanging out with friends, playing board games

→**Moderate activities:** Skateboarding, slow pitch softball, shooting basketballs

→**Vigorous activities:** Running, jogging, football, soccer, basketball, jumping rope

How to roughly estimate air quality based on visibility without an air quality monitor or airport visibility estimate:

- 1) Face away from the sun. 2) Determine the limit of your visible range by looking for targets at known distances (miles).
- 3) Visible range is that point at which even high contrast objects totally disappear. 4) Use the values above to determine the local AQI

Tuolumne County Public Health Department
 (209) 533-7401
<https://www.tuolumnecounty.ca.gov/250/Public-Health>

Tuolumne County Air Pollution Control District
 (209) 533-5693
www.tuolumnecounty.ca.gov/364/Air-Pollution-Control-District



Special thanks to the North Coast Unified Air Quality Management District for providing this valuable tool

WILDFIRES AND YOUR HEALTH



Protect yourself from the harmful effects of smoke and ash.

IF YOU SEE OR SMELL SMOKE

Limit outdoor activities, especially exercise.

Stay indoors with windows and doors closed.

If you run an air conditioner, keep the filter clean and the fresh-air intake closed—use the recirculate setting.

Seek shelter outside of the affected area if you do not have an air conditioner and it is too warm to stay inside with the windows closed.

Protect your pets and bring them indoors.

Keep car windows and vents closed and operate air conditioning in recirculate mode.

Seek medical attention if you experience repeated coughing, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, wheezing, chest tightness or pain, nausea, or unusual fatigue or lightheadedness

Pay attention to local air quality reports and find current information at the Tuolumne County Air Pollution Control District (website link in bottom right corner).

THOSE AT GREATER RISK

Older adults

Children

Pregnant women

People with heart or lung disease

IF YOU SEE ASH

Do not allow children to play in ash or with toys soiled with ash.

Clean ash off of pets.

Avoid skin contact—wear gloves, long sleeved shirts, and long pants.

Wash any ash off your skin ASAP.

Thoroughly wash your garden fruits and vegetables before eating them.

Use caution when cleaning up ash.

Well-fitting dust masks may provide some protection during cleanup only.

Use a damp cloth or wet mop on lightly dusted areas.

Do not use leaf blowers or shop vacs as they will blow small exhaust particles into the air. Vacuums with HEPA filters can be used.

Gently sweep hard surfaces followed by wet mopping.

Dispose of ash in the regular trash.

MORE INFORMATION

www.tuolumnecounty.ca.gov/366/current-air-quality

www.cdc.gov/features/wildfires

www.facebook.com/tuolumnecountypublichealth/

