

Shasta County

Air Quality Management District

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P R E S S R E L E A S E

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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AIR QUALITY AND PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICIALS URGE CAUTION DUE TO WILDFIRE SMOKE

SHASTA COUNTY - The Shasta County Air Quality Management District (AQMD) and Public Health are advising smoke-sensitive residents of Shasta County, to limit outdoor activities due to the continuing presence of wildfire smoke. All members of the public, especially those with respiratory or heart disease, the elderly, pregnant women, and children should avoid prolonged outdoor exertion. Everyone else should limit prolonged exertion in areas of noticeable smoke accumulation. Individuals wishing to minimize their exposure should:

- Limit exercise and outdoor activities
- Remain indoors with the windows and doors closed
- Turn on an air conditioner with a recirculation setting (such as in a vehicle)

The Air Quality Management District operates one air quality monitor in Anderson that continuously monitors for fine particulate matter less than 2.5 microns in size (PM_{2.5}). The Anderson monitor is currently indicating readings in the “Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups” range on the Air Quality Index

(AQI). Additionally, ground level ozone is expected to rise into the “unhealthy for Sensitive Groups” range on the AQI.

The AQI readings from the fixed monitors are updated hourly and are available at the following website: www.co.shasta.ca.us/index/drm_index/aq_index/aq_map.aspx

Remember, due to changing weather conditions, air quality can change at any time in all areas of the county depending on wind patterns and topography.

If the area you live in is not near a monitor, you can use this table to visually estimate the air quality:

Visibility Range in Miles	Levels of Health Concern	Cautionary Statement	Particulate Matter Levels (1 hour average)
11 miles and up	Good	None	0-38
6-10	Moderate	Unusually sensitive individuals should consider reducing prolonged or heavy exertion	39-88
3 to 5	Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups	People with heart or lung disease, older adults, and children should reduce prolonged exertion.	89-138
1.5 to 2.75	Unhealthy	People with heart or lung disease, older adults, and children should avoid prolonged exertion. Everyone else should reduce prolonged or heavy exertion.	139-350
1- 1.25	Very Unhealthy	People with heart or lung disease, older adults, and children should avoid all outdoor physical activity. Everyone else should avoid prolonged or heavy exertion.	351-526
less than 1 mile	Hazardous	People with heart or lung disease, older adults, and children should remain indoors and keep activity levels low. Everyone else should avoid all outdoor physical activity.	Over 526

When using the visibility index to determine smoke concentrations, it is important to:

- Face away from the sun.
- Determine the limit of your visibility range by looking for targets at known distances (miles). The visible range is the point at which even high-contrast objects (e.g., a dark forested mountain viewed against the sky at noon) totally disappear.
- At times, the visibility index may be hard to use, especially if specific landmarks at known distances are not available for judging visibility range, or at dawn or dusk. Furthermore, the above visibility categories for PM levels only apply in dry air conditions. For a given PM level, visibility decreases substantially at relative humidity above 65%, therefore, this method of estimation should not be used under conditions of high humidity. At night or during periods when visibility cannot be used to estimate smoke levels, intense smoky odor can be used to indicate potentially harmful levels.

For additional information and updates, you may call the Air Quality Management District at 225-5674.

Additional safety tips can be found by going to www.shastahhsa.net and by clicking the “Protect yourself from wildfire smoke” link.

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