



DEALING WITH SMOKE

TIPS FOR SENIORS

FROM THE AIR DISTRICTS OF THE SACRAMENTO REGION

As fire agencies battle wildfires in the area, there are things you can do to protect your health from the harmful pollutants filling the air due to wildfire smoke.

Seniors are more susceptible to air pollution because they are more likely to have medical conditions such as chronic pulmonary disease, emphysema and bronchitis. High air pollution levels can worsen their health.

While the ash and smoke from wildfires are visible reminders of the pollution impacting an area, be even more cautious of the fine particles within smoke that you can't see. These particles, which are invisible to the naked eye, bypass our body's natural defense system and lodge in our lungs.

Smoke can cause coughing, a scratchy throat, headaches and sinus irritation. Over the long-term, smoke can decrease lung function and make the body more susceptible to developing diseases such as asthma, bronchitis, emphysema and possibly cancer.

Here are some tips seniors can follow to protect themselves from unhealthy air:

- ✓ **Stay indoors.** Limit your exposure to poor air quality conditions as much as possible. Keep your windows and doors closed. Use your air conditioning system and place it on recirculation mode, if available.
- ✓ **Reduce your activity.** Reducing your physical activity outside lowers the amount of polluted air your body intakes. Seniors with heart or lung disease should avoid prolonged or heavy exertion.
- ✓ **Consult a physician.** If you or a family member suffers from a heart or lung ailment, talk with a doctor. He or she can advise you on treatment or whether and when you should leave the area. Call a doctor immediately if your condition worsens. If you suffer from chronic diseases, have an adequate supply of medications (five days or more) available.
- ✓ **Stay alert.** Listen to your local news, weather forecasts and air quality alerts provided by the local air district or through the Sacramento region's Spare The Air program. If the air quality in your area worsens take necessary precautions to protect your health.

SACRAMENTO METROPOLITAN



Serving Sutter and Yuba Counties



If you have air quality questions, please call your local air district:

- El Dorado County Air Quality Management District - (530) 621-7501
- Feather River Air Quality Management District (Yuba and Sutter Counties) - (530) 634-7659
- Placer County Air Pollution Control District - (530) 745-2330
- Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District - (916) 874-4800 or (800) 880-9025
- Yolo-Solano Air Quality Management District - (530) 757-3650