

COUNTY OF PLACER

PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICE

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SMOKY CONDITIONS WIDESPREAD IN PLACER COUNTY; ADVISABLE TO CURTAIL ALL OUTDOOR EXERCISE ACTIVITIES

Placer County, CA June 26, 2008 – Smoky conditions are widespread in Placer County from the valley floor to the Lake Tahoe area. Smoke continues to impact Placer County from fires burning in Placer County and throughout Northern California. Average measures of fine particulates yesterday were more than two (Roseville) to four (Auburn) times the federal standard. Tom Christofk, Placer County Air Pollution Control Officer and Dr. Richard Burton, MD, Placer County's Health Officer, are issuing an air quality advisory. With particulate matter concentrations in the unhealthy range it is advised that all outdoor exercise activities be voluntarily curtailed.

The federal Particulate Matter 2.5 - 24 hour average standard is 35 micrograms per cubic meter. In Roseville the average for June 25th was 78 micrograms per cubic meter and 151 micrograms per cubic meter for Auburn.

The smoke is extensive and is forecast to continue as long as the wildfires continue to burn and weather conditions do not significantly change, which at this time appears to be at least until Saturday. Residents are reminded to take common-sense precautions as Placer County will continue to be affected.

Scientific studies have linked the fine particles associated with smoke with a variety of significant health problems.

Symptoms include eye irritation, throat irritation, and coughing. People with existing heart and lung disease, including asthma, may experience heightened symptoms. They should monitor their health and consult with their health care provider should their symptoms worsen. Even healthy people may experience some of these symptoms in smoky conditions. Seek medical help if you experience symptoms that worsen or become severe.

Dr. Burton and Christofk urge residents to keep in mind the following recommendations when they are in smoky conditions:

- Healthy people should delay outdoor strenuous exercise.
- Children and elderly people should avoid outdoor activities, particularly prolonged outdoor exertion.
- People with specific illnesses, particularly respiratory problems, should remain indoors.
- Using paper mask filters, which are not capable of filtering extra-fine smoke particles, and which restrict airflow, is not recommended.
- Stay inside with doors and windows shut. Use the recycle or recirculate mode on the air conditioner in your home or car. Avoid cooking and vacuuming, which can increase pollutants indoors.
- Asthmatics should follow their asthma-management plans.
- Contact your doctor if you have symptoms such as chest pain, chest tightness, shortness of breath, or severe fatigue. This is important for not only people with chronic lung or heart disease, but also for individuals who have not been previously diagnosed with such illnesses. Smoke can "unmask" or produce symptom of such diseases.
- Keep airways moist by drinking lots of water. Breathing through a warm, wet washcloth can also help relieve dryness.

Use the following index to assess the air quality based on the visibility in a given area:

- Face away from the sun. Determine visibility range by looking for targets that are at known distances (miles).
- The visible range is the point where even high-contrast objects disappear.
- After determining visibility in miles use the following Wildfire Smoke Visibility Index to assess air quality.

Visibility	Health Category	Cautionary Statements	
Range			
10+ miles	Good	None	
5 – 10 miles	Moderate	Usually sensitive people should consider reducing prolonged or heavy exertion.	
3 – 5 miles	Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups	Sensitive people should reduce prolonged or heavy exertion.	
1.5 – 2.5 miles	Unhealthy	Sensitive people should avoid prolonged or heavy exertion. Everyone else should reduce prolonged or heavy exertion.	
1 – 1.25 miles	Very Unhealthy	Very Unhealthy Sensitive people should avoid all physical activity outdoors Everyone else should avoid prolonged or heavy exertion.	
<0.75 miles	Hazardous	Sensitive people should remain indoors and keep activity levels low. Everyone else should avoid all physical activity outdoors.	

Information will be updated and posted to the District Web site as available at www.placer.ca.gov. For general air quality information go to www.sparetheair.com.

Following is the Air Quality Index table for Particle Pollution for reference.

Air Quality Index (AQI)

Index Values	Levels of Health Concern	Cautionary Statements
0-50	Good	None
51-100*	Moderate	Unusually sensitive people should consider reducing prolonged or heavy exertion.
101-150	Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups	People with heart or lung disease, older adults, and children should reduce prolonged or heavy exertion.
151-200	Unhealthy	People with heart or lung disease, older adults, and children should avoid prolonged or heavy exertion. Everyone else should reduce prolonged or heavy exertion.
201-300	Very Unhealthy	People with heart or lung disease, older adults, and children should avoid all physical activity outdoors. Everyone else should avoid prolonged or heavy exertion.
301-500	Hazardous	People with heart or lung disease, older adults, and children should remain indoors and keep activity levels low. Everyone else should avoid all physical activity outdoors.

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