



--PUBLIC INFORMATION RELEASE--

AIR QUALITY ADVISORY

September 18, 2020

The air quality advisory issued by the Colusa County Air Pollution Control District has been extended.

September 19 – September 21, 2020

The August Complex Fire and the North Complex Fire West Zone (formerly the Bear fire) as well as several other wildfires are producing significant smoke impacts to local areas, and residents in these affected areas should be aware of their local air quality and take necessary precautions to protect themselves.

These fires are being managed by state and local fire officials, but smoke impacts may continue throughout the week.

The Colusa County Air Pollution Control District reports that Air Quality conditions currently are in the moderate range, but are forecast to decline into the unhealthy for sensitive groups range. Conditions may fluctuate from moderate to unhealthy throughout this time period.

Smoke from fires produce fine-particulate matter (PM_{2.5}), which can cause serious health problems including lung disease, asthma attacks, and increased risk of heart attack or stroke. Where conditions warrant, people should limit their outdoor activity.

People with existing respiratory conditions, young children and elderly people are susceptible to health effects from these pollutants. Air District officials urge residents to follow their doctors' orders when exposed to fire emissions.

This advisory is also posted on the Colusa County Air Pollution Control District website www.countyofcolusa.org/461/Air-Pollution-Control-District, with links to additional air quality information resources. This advisory is also posted on the Colusa County Facebook page www.facebook.com/ColusaCountyGov and Instagram page www.instagram.com/colusacountygov.

Additional Information & Resources

About AirNow.gov:

- A network of monitors maintained and operated by trained government agencies.
- It is recommended by many air districts, the California Air Resources Board, and U.S. EPA.
- AirNow monitors form a network to track regional air quality. Pollutants like smoke tend to be well-mixed in the atmosphere and may be adequately represented by these monitors, even if a monitor is not in the same neighborhood as a school.
- Uses highly accurate tools that are regularly monitored for quality control by U.S. EPA. Tools remain accurate at all levels as opposed to personal sensors like Purple Air, which overestimate (especially at AQI of 150 or higher)

About Masks:

- When air is unhealthy, the best option is to reduce physical activity and stay indoors with windows/doors closed. If indoor temperature is high, get to a location with clean filtered air such as a public library, shopping mall or other building with heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) system filtration.
- Masks have limitations. Surgical gauze masks provide no protection from smoke. N95 respirator masks are designed for professional use by trained adults and are not intended for children. Therefore, masks are not recommended for children by air quality districts/public health agencies.
- N95 masks require a perfect seal to be effective. If these masks are not fitted correctly, they will provide little if any protection.
- Masks can exacerbate breathing difficulty for sensitive breathers or potentially cause deeper breathing, which draws particulates deeper into the lungs if they are not fitted correctly.

- Masks must be kept clean and replaced frequently to be effective. If a mask is used, please refer to the mask manufacturer's recommendations on cleaning and replacement intervals.