

LAKE COUNTY AIR QUALITY MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

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-PUBLIC INFORMATION RELEASE-

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AIR QUALITY ADVISORY **MODERATE TO UNHEALTHY AIR QUALITY FORECAST THROUGH THE** **WEEKEND IN LAKE COUNTY**

Air quality in Lake County currently is in the “Moderate” range with localized areas reaching “Unhealthy for Sensitive Individuals,” due to visible smoke intrusions into the basin. The smoke and haze currently visible throughout Lake County are primarily the result of transport smoke from numerous fires in Northern California and Southern Oregon including the Chetco Bar fire currently burning 131,197 acres in the Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest and the Eclipse Complex burning 76,100 acres in the Klamath National Forest. Today’s degraded air quality is the result of ultra fine particulates and other air pollutants contained in the smoke combined with the high temperatures and humidity.

The District is actively monitoring the transport smoke impacts. The air quality forecast for the weekend is for “Moderate to Unhealthy” conditions likely throughout the County. Localized areas of the County may experience short duration smoke impacts in the “Unhealthy to Hazardous” range as smoke drifts through the County.

The “Moderate to Unhealthy” air quality forecast for the remainder of the day and through the holiday weekend results from high levels of ultra fine particulates from the California and Oregon fires and the increased ground-level ozone. Ozone is generated when combustion products in the smoke are combined with the high temperatures, sunlight, and humidity.

When smoke is present in the Lake County Air Basin, individuals with asthma, bronchitis, emphysema and other lung or heart diseases should carefully adhere to their medical treatment plans and maintain at least a five-day supply of prescribed medications. They should limit outdoor activity and unnecessary physical exertion. Air conditioning that recirculates indoor air should be used, when available. Drinking plenty of water to avoid drying of the airways is recommended, unless restricted for medical reasons.

Dust masks are not protective against fine particulate, which is the pollutant most detrimental to health caused by wildfire smoke. Such masks are only useful in filtering out the ash and larger particles that are encountered in burn areas. Air purifying respirators, such as N-95 filtering face pieces, may be effective in reducing harmful particulate matter, but also increase the work of breathing, which can lead to physiologic stress, and are not recommended as a general protective measure.

With air quality forecast in the “Moderate to Unhealthy” range, people are recommended to use caution and be prepared for rapidly changing conditions. The potential for localized areas of unhealthy air, regional haze, and particulate from these fires are expected to continue throughout Lake County through the weekend until the weather pattern changes.