

LAKE COUNTY AIR QUALITY MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

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-PUBLIC INFORMATION RELEASE-

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RELEASE DATE: August 2, 2018
TIME: 02:30 PM

AIR QUALITY ALERT for Thursday, August 2, 2018 **Very Unhealthy to Hazardous Air Quality for Lake County.**

August 2, 2018 @ 2:30pm The smoke and haze currently impacting all areas of Lake County are primarily the result of the River Fire and Ranch Fire in Lake and Mendocino Counties. Other active fires in Northern California and Oregon may add to the smoke impacts in Lake County. The "VERY UNHEALTHY" to "HAZARDOUS" air quality alert results from the heavy smoke conditions experienced in Lake County and the forecast for extended smoke impacts, and impacts from other air pollutants in the smoke lingering in Lake County until conditions change.

The District is actively monitoring the smoke impacts. Current particulate levels in Lake County are in the range from "Unhealthy" to "Hazardous" throughout Lake County. Smoke levels continue to exceed the Air Quality Index maximum range. With particulate levels this high, everyone needs to take steps to protect themselves from exposure. The "Unhealthy to Hazardous" levels of smoke are expected to continue through Wednesday. All areas may experience "Very Unhealthy to Hazardous" air quality, and individuals should take precautions. The smoke is expected to remain in Lake County through the Friday or longer depending on the weather and fire activity, though we may see periods of improving air quality as the winds shift through the next few days.

Conditions can change quickly. Smokey conditions can cause irritation of the eyes, nose and air passages. These conditions can be hazardous for sensitive individual including children, the elderly, individuals with heart conditions, and those with chronic lung disease such as asthma, bronchitis, and other respiratory conditions. 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 while smoke is present. 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.

If you cannot leave the smoky area, good ways to protect your lungs from wildfire smoke include staying indoors and reducing physical activity. Wearing an air purifying respirator can also help protect your lungs from wildfire smoke. Air purifying respirators, such as N-95 or P100 filtering face pieces, may be effective in reducing some of the harmful particulate matter, but they also increase the work of breathing, can lead to physiologic stress, and are not recommended as a general protective measure. Dust masks are not protective against the ultra fine particulate, which is the pollutant most detrimental to health caused by wildfire smoke.

With air quality forecast to be in the “Unhealthy” to “Hazardous” range, people are recommended to use caution, avoid strenuous activity, avoid outdoor activities, and reduce other sources of air pollution (such as smoking, use of aerosol products, frying or broiling meats, burning candles, vacuuming, etc.) and be prepared for rapidly changing conditions. Localized areas in the higher levels of hazardous air quality can be expected for the several days, until the local fires are partially contained and the weather pattern shifts to clear the smoke. Take appropriate measures until the smoke clears.