

LAKE COUNTY AIR QUALITY MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

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-PUBLIC INFORMATION RELEASE-

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AIR QUALITY ALERT for Wednesday, August 8, 2018 **Moderate to Unhealthy Air Quality for Lake County.**

August 7, 2018 @ 4:30pm The smoke and haze currently impacting many areas of Lake County are primarily the result of the River Fire and Ranch Fire in Lake and Mendocino Counties. The "UNHEALTHY" air quality alert for the portions of Clearlake and all of the North Shore results from the heavy smoke conditions expected from the burn areas. All other areas of Lake County are forecast to have "MODERATE" to "UNHEALTHY" conditions depending on the wind and fire conditions.

The District is actively monitoring the smoke impacts throughout the County. Current particulate levels in Lake County are in the range from "MODERATE" to "UNHEALTHY". The South County (Middletown, Hidden Valley, and Cobb) was "UNHEALTHY", Lakeport and Kelseyville were "MODERATE" on Tuesday morning, though conditions worsened to "UNHEALTHY" by mid day. We expect similar conditions to continue Wednesday as well. When particulate levels reach "UNHEALTHY" levels, everyone needs to take steps to protect themselves from exposure. All areas of the County are likely to have periods of "GOOD" to "MODERATE" air quality as the winds shift through the next few days, but the potential for periods of "UNHEALTHY" air quality continues through the work week. All areas of the County may experience "UNHEALTHY" air quality as smoke settles into the basin in the overnight and morning hours. The smoke typically lifts by mid day into the evening resulting in "GOOD" to "MODERATE" air quality later in the day.

Conditions can change quickly. Watch for hazy conditions developing, as this is an indicator that air quality is approaching "UNHEALTHY" levels. Smokey conditions can cause irritation of the eyes, nose and air passages. These conditions can be especially hazardous for sensitive individuals including children, teenagers, 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. When conditions reach “UNHEALTHY” levels, everyone should reduce physical activity and avoid smoke exposure.

If you cannot leave the smoky area, good ways to protect your lungs from wildfire smoke include staying indoors, changing your indoor air filters, using a HEPA air filter, 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 and medical masks are not protective against the ultra fine particulate, which is the pollutant most detrimental to health caused by wildfire smoke.

If you are in an area that has been repopulated or has not been evacuated, please remember that the smoke and ash are hazardous to your health and the health of others. DO NOT use yard blowers or other similar equipment to clear the ash and debris. Avoid all activities that cause the ash to become airborne to prevent creating additional health hazards for yourself and your community.

With air quality forecast continues to have a potential for “UNHEALTHY” to “HAZARDOUS” for portions of Clearlake and all of the North Shore Communities, the rest of the County is forecast to be “MODERATE” to “UNHEALTHY” depending on the winds and fire activity. When smoke or ash is present, 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 “HAZARDOUS” air quality can be expected for the several days, until the local fires are contained. Take appropriate measures until the smoke clears.