

LAKE COUNTY AIR QUALITY MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

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-PUBLIC INFORMATION RELEASE-

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AIR QUALITY Alert For Oct. 17 into Oct. 18, 2017 **Areas of Heavy Smoke in Lake County.**

The smoke and haze currently visible through areas of Lake County last week has dissipated. The “Unhealthy” air quality alert results from the variable winds brining heavy smoke and some ash fall into areas of Lake County primarily from the Pocket fire, and other regional fires. Impacts currently have been observed in Cobb, Kelseyville, Clearlake Riviera, Lower Lake, and into the city of Clearlake and the North Shore. A strong inversion has setup over the lake holding the smoke in the basin. Expect impacts throughout Lake County through the overnight hours.

The District is actively monitoring the smoke impacts. Current particulate levels in Lake County are in the range from “Good” in the Middletown and Hidden Valley Lake areas to “Good” range in the northern portions of the County. The heavy smoke impact is between these areas headed North East from the Pocket Fire. All areas of the County may experience “Unhealthy” air quality at times as winds change, though overall conditions are improving. The smoke is expected to intermittently impact all of Lake County through the week. Currently there are no known fires in the Lake County Basin.

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. 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.

Localized areas of unhealthy air quality, regional haze, and particulate can be expected until the regional fires are fully contained and the weather pattern shifts to clear the smoke. Take appropriate measures until the fires are out and remaining smoke clears.