



LAKE COUNTY AIR QUALITY  
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## **-PUBLIC INFORMATION RELEASE-**

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### **MODERATE to UNHEALTHY AIR QUALITY Forecast Through the Weekend** **Air Quality in Lake County May be Degraded From Smoke Intrusions** **Caution is Urged.**

August 15, 2015 @ 2100hrs. -- The Jerusalem and Rocky fires are winding down with smoke production greatly reduced. The source of the major smoke intrusion into Lake County are the major fires burning in Northern California, including the Humbolt Complex, the Route Complex, the South Complex, the Gasquet Complex, the River Complex and other Northern California, Oregon, and Washington fires. With the forecast for north winds, we may experience smoke from these fires.

The Lake County Quality Management District reports that Air Quality conditions currently are in the “Moderate” to “Unhealthy for sensitive individuals” range. The forecast for the remainder of the weekend is for “Moderate” to “Unhealthy” air quality. With the smoke moving in on Saturday and the stagnant air pattern, the smoke is forecast to remain trapped in the Lake County Air Basin until conditions change.

Conditions can change quickly from “Moderate” to “Unhealthy.” Localized areas may experience intermittent particulate levels in the “Hazardous” range. All areas of Lake County may be significantly impacted, should meteorological conditions worsen.

The “Moderate” to “Unhealthy” air quality forecast results from higher levels of fine particulates from the Northwest fires and the possibility of increased ground-level ozone. Ozone is generated when combustion products in the smoke combine with the high temperatures, sunlight, and humidity. Other chemical reactions reduce visibility by forming secondary particulates.

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, can lead to physiologic stress, and are not recommended as a general protective measure.

With the potential for significant smoke from the regional fires, individuals planning to enjoy the outdoors especially those at higher elevations, such as Mt. Konocti park, Boggs Forest, and the Mendocino National Forest, should be prepared for significant smoke impacts. Caution is recommended.