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-PUBLIC INFORMATION RELEASE-

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UNHEALTHY AIR QUALITY Forecast For Monday August 17, 2015 **Air Quality in Lake County May be Degraded From Smoke Intrusions** **Caution is Urged.**

August 17, 2015 @ 0800hrs. -- 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. We are currently experiencing "Unhealthy" air quality from these fires.

The Lake County Quality Management District reports that Air Quality conditions currently are in the "Unhealthy" range. The forecast through Tuesday afternoon is for "Unhealthy" air quality, with some clearing possible. The smoke moved into Lake County starting on Saturday, the current weather pattern will keep the smoke in the Lake County Air Basin until conditions change.

All areas of Lake County are likely to be significantly impacted. Conditions can change quickly, and localized areas may experience intermittent particulate levels in the "Very Unhealthy" to "Hazardous" ranges.

The "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 should consider avoiding certain higher elevation areas that may be more heavily impacted, such as Mt. Konocti park, Boggs Forest, and the Mendocino National Forest.

With air quality in the “Unhealthy” range, people are recommended to limit prolonged or heavy exertion and limit time spent outdoors.