



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
August 1, 2024

**JOINT AIR QUALITY ADVISORY UPDATE ISSUED BY THE
BUTTE COUNTY AIR QUALITY MANAGEMENT DISTRICT and
BUTTE COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT**

To:

Public Safety Personnel	School Officials
News Media	Sac. Valley Air Basin Coordinating Council
Adjacent Air Quality Management Districts	County Health Officer
Butte County & City Managers	California Air Resources Board
Local/State Law & Fire Federal	Environmental Protection Agency
Local Hospitals	

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The Butte County Air Quality Management District and Butte County Public Health are issuing this updated Joint Air Quality Advisory to inform the public about wildfire smoke impacts in Butte County due to the Park Fire. The highest concentrations of smoke have been observed in northern portions of Butte County, including the Chico and Paradise areas. An AQI level of **Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups** with short-term impacts in the **Unhealthy** to **Very Unhealthy** range is possible with the current weather pattern and fire activity. Check current AQI levels (links below) to stay informed as air quality is expected to fluctuate throughout the day. This advisory is effective for Thursday, August 1, 2024 and Friday, August 2, 2024.

Wildfire smoke is a complex mixture of air pollutants that are harmful to human health. The major air pollutant of concern is fine particulate matter also known as PM2.5. Exposure to air pollutants in wildfire smoke can irritate the eyes and airways, causing cough, a dry scratchy throat, runny nose, trouble breathing, and irritated sinuses.

While all persons may experience varying degrees of symptoms, people at increased risk from smoke inhalation include:

- Young children
- Older adults
- Pregnant women
- People with chronic respiratory and heart conditions
- People who work outside
- People experiencing homelessness

Persons experiencing questionable or severe symptoms should seek professional medical advice and treatment.

People can reduce smoke inhalation by taking the following actions:

- Limit outdoor exertion, especially children, the elderly, and those with pre-existing respiratory conditions;
- If your child shows signs of compromised breathing or has respiratory conditions, follow your doctor's directions regarding medicines and asthma management plans. Call your doctor if symptoms worsen.
- Keep doors and windows closed as much as possible in buildings and vehicles.
- When AQI levels reach Unhealthy levels (150 or higher), consider if the work needed to be completed outside is essential. If N-95 respirators are used, be sure that they are correctly fitted. **Remember that a dust mask, cloth face covering, or medical mask will not filter out smoke!** Staying indoors is the best option to reduce exposure to wildfire smoke.
- Try to limit sources of air pollution in your home (smoking, use of incense or candles, and frying food are some examples of indoor air pollution sources).
- If you have air conditioning, make sure your setting is on "recirculate" both in your car and in your home to use inside air rather than drawing in air from the outside.
- Use high efficiency air filters (rated MERV-13 or higher) for your HVAC system if possible. Portable HEPA filters can also be used (avoid Ozone-producing air purifiers).
- * Track air quality in your area through websites or mobile apps to plan your activity before heading out. The BCAQMD website (www.butteairquality.com) has daily air quality forecasts as well as links to real-time air quality data. The Airnow Fire and Smoke Map (<https://fire.airnow.gov>) shows current air quality conditions at many locations throughout Butte County.

Outdoor residential burning is currently prohibited by CAL FIRE. More information including access to air quality data is available at www.bcaqmd.org or www.butteairquality.com. Questions may be directed to 530-332-9400 during regular business hours.

Air Quality Index (AQI): Particle Pollution and Visibility Chart

Index Values	Levels of Health Concern	Cautionary Statements	Visibility Range in Miles
0-50	Good	None	10+ miles
51-100*	Moderate	Unusually sensitive people should consider reducing prolonged or heavy exertion.	5 – 10 miles
101-150	Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups	People with heart or lung disease, older adults, and children should reduce prolonged or heavy exertion.	3 – 5 miles
<u>151-200</u>	<u>Unhealthy</u>	People with heart or lung disease, older adults, and children should avoid prolonged or heavy exertion. Everyone else should reduce prolonged or heavy exertion.	1.5 – 2.5 miles
201-300	Very Unhealthy	People with heart or lung disease, older adults, and children should avoid all physical activity outdoors. Everyone else should avoid prolonged or heavy exertion.	1 – 1.25 miles
301-500	Hazardous	People with heart or lung disease, older adults, and children should remain indoors and keep activity levels low. Everyone else should avoid all physical activity outdoors.	< 0.75 miles

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