



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**JOINT PRESS RELEASE ISSUED BY THE
BUTTE COUNTY AIR QUALITY MANAGEMENT DISTRICT and
BUTTE COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH**

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The Butte County Air Quality Management District (BCAQMD) and Butte County Department of Public Health (BCPH) are reminding the community that wildfire smoke in Butte County is possible throughout the year but is most likely during the summer and autumn seasons. There are steps that you can take to prepare your home or business to reduce the effects of smoke during wildfire events.

Know Where to Find Air Quality Information:

- The AirNow Fire and Smoke Map at <https://fire.airnow.gov> includes official monitoring stations as well as many unofficial sensors throughout Butte County.
- The BCAQMD website (www.butteairquality.com) has daily air quality forecasts as well as links to real-time air quality data.
- Download the California Smoke Spotter app in the Apple Store or on Google Play to track prescribed burning, smoke impacts, and current air quality in your area.

Make Your Home or Business Smoke Ready:

- Keep a stock of backup high-efficiency filters (MERV-13 or higher) that can help filter out small particulates. If you don't have a central HVAC system, consider portable air cleaners that can be placed in rooms experiencing the most use. Fixing gaps in doors and windows can help keep smoke out.
- Be prepared with a correctly-fitting N-95 respirator if you need to spend time outdoors during smoky conditions. Please note: N-95 masks are not intended for children and can be dangerous for individuals with lung and heart conditions. **Remember that a dust mask, bandana, or medical mask will not filter out smoke!**

Clean Air Center Opportunity:

- BCAQMD has several portable air cleaners available for loan to facilities within low-income and disadvantaged communities that can allow free public access during regular operating hours.
- Eligible facilities can contact BCAQMD at 530-332-9400 to request portable air cleaners before or during wildfire smoke impacts in Butte County. More information at www.butteairquality.com.



Know Ahead of Time:

- Check with your doctor about what you should do during smoke events if any family member has respiratory illnesses, including asthma, or heart or lung disease.
- Be familiar with your community's resources for "clean air spaces" or places that you can go to cool down and escape the smoke safely, such as malls, book stores, and theaters.

The major air pollutant of concern during wildfires is fine particulate matter (PM_{2.5}). While all persons may experience varying degrees of symptoms, people at increased risk include: young children, older adults, pregnant women, people who smoke, people who work outside, people experiencing homelessness, and people with respiratory conditions. Symptoms of exposure to wildfire smoke may include, but are not limited to, coughing, watery and itchy eyes, headaches, and difficulty breathing. Exposure to smoke can reduce the body's ability to fight infection and viruses and can worsen the symptoms of respiratory illnesses, such as COVID-19.

Learn more at <http://bcaqmd.org/resources-education/wildfires/> where you can find resources on tracking smoke, checking the Air Quality Index near you, and ways to protect yourself from wildfire smoke. You can also follow BCAQMD on Twitter (@bcaqmd) and BCPH on Facebook (@ButteCountyPublicHealth) and Twitter (@BC_Pubhealth).

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