



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**July 8, 2019**

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

**From:** W. James Wagoner, Air Pollution Control Officer  
Dr. Andrew Miller, MD, Health Officer

Is your home or business ready for wildfire smoke? The Butte County Air Quality Management District (BCAQMD) and Butte County Public Health Department (BCPHD) would like to remind community members that wildfire smoke in Butte County is possible throughout the dry season. Wildfire smoke can be created locally or travel hundreds of miles to reach our area. The major air pollutant of concern during wildfires is fine particulate matter (PM<sub>2.5</sub>). 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, 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.

BCAQMD and BCPHD recommend residents take the following steps to reduce your exposure to smoke during future wildfire smoke events:

- Check with your doctor about what you should do during smoke events. If any family member has heart or lung disease, including asthma, have a plan to manage your condition.
- Consider keeping several spare high-efficiency filters in storage if you have a central air system. HVAC filters should be rated MERV-13 (or equivalent) or higher to filter out smoke particles.
- Ask your air conditioning service professional how to close the fresh-air intake if your central air system or room air conditioner has one.
- Consider purchasing one or more portable high-efficiency (or HEPA) filters if you cannot filter indoor air through a central air system to help create one or more "clean rooms." Avoid air purifiers that generate ozone.
- Know where to find air quality information. The Butte County Air Quality Management District's website ([www.butteairquality.com](http://www.butteairquality.com)) has daily air quality forecasts as well as links to real-time air quality data. [Airnow.gov](http://airnow.gov) is the primary resource for air quality conditions throughout the nation.
- Learn more on how to protect yourself from wildfire smoke at <http://bcaqmd.org/resources-education/wildfires/>. You can also follow BCAQMD on Twitter (@bcaqmd) and BCPHD on Facebook (@ButteCountyPublicHealth) and Twitter (@BC\_Pubhealth).

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
151-200	Unhealthy	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

###