

Wildfire Smoke Action Plan

For Children with Asthma



Caregiver Toolkit

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1. Masks to Protect from Wildfire Smoke During Pregnancy or Early Child Years



This information sheet was developed by the Western States PEHSU along with our partners.

Local public health officials might have additional advice for where you live. Local conditions may be important, including weather and how long wildfire smoke events last. When there is smoke outside, the best place to be is an indoor space with good air quality. To learn about creating an indoor space with good air quality see <https://www.airnow.gov/sites/default/files/2020-06/reduce-your-smoke-exposure.pdf>.

General Information:

Will a mask help protect me and my children from wildfire smoke?

Yes, some types of masks (face-coverings that go over your mouth and nose) can partially protect you and your children from breathing in wildfire smoke. Some masks are much better than others, and some masks may not protect you *at all* from smoke. Keep reading to find out which masks are the best for keeping out wildfire smoke. Your child should not participate in *extra* outdoor activities (like playing sports) whether or not they are wearing a mask. Remember that masks can help your child breathe *less* smoke, but they still breathe *some* smoke, especially if they are being active.

What is the best type of mask?

The best mask to keep out wildfire smoke is a type of mask that is made to keep out small particles in smoke when you breathe. These masks are called respirators (like N95s).

- If your child is age 7 or older, their face will likely fit an adult small N95.
- If your child is age 2 to age 7, it is less likely that you will be able to find an N95 that will fit their face well. But, there are child size medical/surgical masks that may fit their face.
- Children should only wear masks if they are over age 2 and are able to tell you if they are uncomfortable.

How can I find a good mask for my child?

When looking for a mask for your child, you want to think about three things, described below in more detail for different kinds of masks:

- How well does the material filter?
- How easy is the material to breathe through?
- How tightly does the mask fit my child's face?
The mask should fully cover the nose and mouth without gaps around the nose, cheeks, and chin.

How do I know if my air quality is bad?

You can go to [airnow.gov](https://www.airnow.gov) on a computer or smartphone. That page can tell you about the air quality index value (AQI) for your zip code.

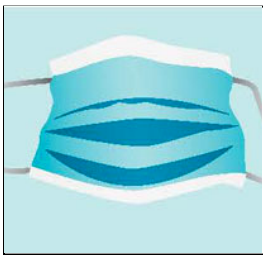
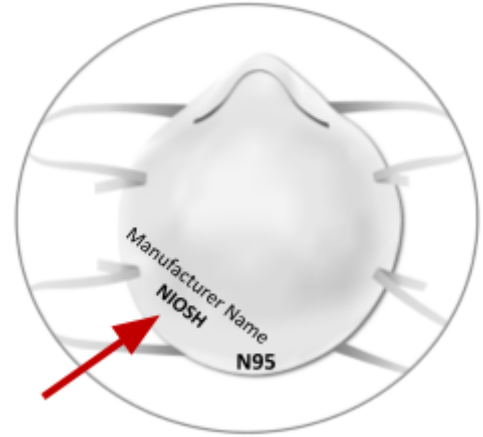
- For more detailed local information, you can look at the map at [fire.airnow.gov](https://www.fire.airnow.gov)
- When the AQI is higher than 101, if smoke is causing coughing, or if smoke events last more than a few days consider using a mask, especially during pregnancy, early child years or if one has underlying health conditions.

Daily AQI Color	Levels of Concern	Values of Index
Green	Good	0 to 50
Yellow	Moderate	51 to 100
Orange	Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups	101 to 150
Red	Unhealthy	151 to 200
Purple	Very Unhealthy	201 to 300
Maroon	Hazardous	301 and higher

Different Types of Masks:

NIOSH-approved masks will decrease the most amount of smoke that your child breathes, especially if they seal (fit well) to the face. This type of mask is sometimes called a *respirator*.

- **Look for masks labeled as “NIOSH N95”.**
 - NIOSH is the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, the government branch that protects workers.
 - Masks that say ‘NIOSH N95’ have material that blocks nearly all smoke particles.
 - For example, pretend there are 1000 smoke particles in the air near your child. If they are not wearing a mask, they will breathe in all 1000 particles. If they are wearing a NIOSH N95 with a good seal, they will breathe only 100 particles. If there are gaps around the face, nose, or chin they will breathe many more particles.
- **Check the seal** of the mask by cupping your hands around the edges on your child’s face. First, have your child blow out hard, as if they are blowing birthday candles, and feel for air leaking around the mask. Then, have your child take a deep breath in. You should see the mask suck toward the face and should *not* feel air flow around the edges. Follow this guidance during pregnancy.
 - Some masks have exhalation valves. You may feel air come out of the valve, but no air should go in through the valve. N95s with or without a valve will protect you from wildfire smoke.
- Even if there are small gaps when your child wears an N95 mask, the N95 is still the best protection from smoke.
- N95 masks aren’t made specifically for children in the US, but children aged 7 and older may be able to wear small or extra small adult sized masks
- Dirty, torn, wet, or crumpled N95 masks should be thrown away.



Medical (or surgical) face masks usually have gaps between their edges and the face. Although this type of mask doesn’t work as well as an N95, some models may help protect your child from smoke.

- In the example above, if there are 1000 smoke particles in the air near your child and they are wearing a medical mask, they will breathe in 700-800 particles. The bigger the gaps between their face and the mask, the more they will breathe in.
- There are rules making sure that the material in medical masks is easy to breathe through. There are no rules about how many particles the material should filter.
 - Because there are no rules about filtering, some masks may only reduce exposure a little.
- Medical masks come in adult and child sizes. Choose the type that best fits your child’s face.

Cloth face masks or coverings, which may help decrease the spread of infections, usually do not reduce exposure to wildfire smoke and air pollution.

- There are no rules for cloth masks about how well the material filters smoke particles or how easy they are to breathe through.



Safety:

- Both NIOSH-approved N95 masks and medical masks can be worn safely by most children.
- Younger children should only wear a mask with an adult present.
- Your child can use a mask safely if they can tell you about any problems they have with the mask. If your child is uncomfortable or says that it is hard to breathe, take it off. Do not use masks for children under age 2.
- Do not use a mask for your child if they might choke or strangle themselves with it (if your child frequently puts things in their mouth, or if they can't have a mask on without pulling on it).
- If you have concerns, check with your child's health care provider.

Pregnancy

If you are pregnant, this information applies to you as well. If you are not breathing well, your baby is not either. Exposure to wildfire smoke may increase the risk that your baby may be born early or small.

If Masks are Not Available:

- Remember that this information is about protection from wildfire smoke and may be different than protection from infections.
 - In particular, N95 masks with or without exhalation valves protect from wildfire smoke.
- If N95 masks are in short supply and are being saved for healthcare use, don't buy them. If medical masks are available, these can be used for some protection. Remember to always focus on other smoke avoidance strategies (such as improving indoor air quality).
- Masks (such as KN95s) from other countries may not follow the same rules as NIOSH approved devices and might not provide the same protection.

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This resource was authored by Stephanie Holm MD MPH PHD, Mark Miller MD MPH and John Balmes MD of the Western States PEHSU in 2020; Last updated 6/3/22

2. How to Set Up Air Quality Alerts

Air Quality Alerts

Text Notifications

Sign up for alerts through EnviroFlash to receive text messages about air quality. These alerts are tied to a specific location, and you can choose what threshold of AQI you would like to be notified about. To sign up, follow the instructions below.

1. Go to www.enviroflash.info
2. Click the green button “Subscribe to EnviroFlash”
3. You can receive alerts either via e-mail or text, but we recommend text because it will reach you faster. To do this, you will need to convert your phone number to an e-mail address. To find out how to do this, click the “Receive as a text message?” link (next to the “Email Address” field).
4. In the new window that appears, find your cellular phone carrier and use that format to convert your phone number to an e-mail address.
 - a. For example, a phone number 555-111-2222 that uses US Cellular would be 5551112222@email.uscc.net
5. Go back to the EnviroFlash page, and put this e-mail address in the “Email Address” and “Confirm Email” fields.
6. Fill out your first and last name and ZIP code.
7. Below “Email Preferences” and “Format,” click “Short.”
8. Check the box next to “Receive Forecasts” and, if available in your area, “Receive Current Conditions.”
9. Then select the level of the Air Quality Index that you want to be alerted about. We recommend selecting “Moderate.”
10. Here is an example of how it should look:

Email Preferences

Format
☐ HTML ☐ Text Only ☒ Short

Receive Action Day Notifications: ☒
Receive Forecasts: ☒
Receive Current Conditions: ☐ *Current Conditions are unavailable for this city.*

Select minimum level at which to receive daily forecast Emails

Forecasts	Current	AQI Values	Levels	Colors
<input type="radio"/>		0-50	Good (receive daily forecast)	Green
<input checked="" type="radio"/>		51-100	Moderate	Yellow
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	101-150	Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups	Orange
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	151-200	Unhealthy	Red
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	201-300	Very Unhealthy	Purple
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	301+	Hazardous	Maroon

11. At the bottom of the page, read the privacy policy and check the box.
12. Click “Subscribe.”
13. You will then receive a text message with a confirmation code. Enter the confirmation code on the next page, and you are all done!

Apps for your Mobile Device

There are also several apps for your mobile device that can be set up to send you push notifications when air quality gets bad, including EPA AirNow, IQAirVisual, and FEMA. See the section “Ways to Check Your Air Quality” for details about these apps. Like the text alerts, these push notifications are usually based on a location that you set ahead of time, and not your actual location.

Emergency Alert Systems

You can sign up for these alert systems to be notified by text and/or e-mail about local emergencies, like severe weather, natural disasters, or evacuations. These alerts **can be helpful if there is an active fire in the area**, in case of an evacuation. However, **most are not set up to notify you about air quality**. Keep in mind that they will send you warnings about that particular city or county, but won’t be relevant to you if you’re traveling outside that area.

To sign up for local emergency alerts, go to <https://mil.wa.gov/alerts#local> and choose your city or county from the list.

Many of the web pages have a way to change the language that looks like this:



For some counties, you may need to choose from a long list of alert types. Look for one like “Emergency Management.”

3. How to Choose a Safe & Effective Air Cleaner



Air cleaners, sometimes called air purifiers, can help clear out wildfire smoke particles and improve indoor air quality.

What type of air cleaner is best?

Mechanical air cleaners with High-Efficiency Particulate Air (HEPA) filters or filters rated MERV-13 and higher are best. Electronic air cleaners may produce ozone or other byproducts in the air that can be harmful to health. You can avoid electronic air cleaners by avoiding products that use terms like: ionizer, ozone generator, electrostatic precipitator, plasma, photocatalytic oxidation, hydroxyl generator, or UV light. Some air cleaners have both a HEPA filter *and* an electronic component, such as an ionizer. If your air cleaner has both, we recommend turning the ionizer function off.

Why is room size important?

Air cleaners are made to clean different sized rooms. It is important to use one that is powerful enough to clean the amount of air in the room where it will be used. The clean air delivery rate (CADR) tells you how much air the air cleaner cleans hourly. This is measured in cubic feet per minute (cfm). Use an air cleaner with a CADR up to 200 cfm for a small room, 200–300 cfm for a medium-sized room, and more than 300 cfm for a large room.

Is it CARB certified?

All air cleaners sold in California must be certified by the California Air Resources Board (CARB) and you can check their list [here \(https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/list-carb-certified-air-cleaning-devices\)](https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/list-carb-certified-air-cleaning-devices). Even if you don't live in California, your healthiest choice will likely be a CARB-certified air cleaner. CARB certifies both mechanical and electronic air cleaners. We recommend choosing mechanical air cleaners.

When choosing an air cleaner, make sure:

- ✓ It is a mechanical air cleaner with a HEPA filter
- ✓ It is the right size for the room where it will be used
- ✓ It is CARB certified

Never purchase an ozone generator– Ozone generators (<https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/our-work/programs/air-cleaners-ozone-products/potentially-hazardous-ozone-generators-sold-air>), which are portable “air cleaners” that intentionally create ozone, should never be used in homes, schools, or any space where people may be present. There are companies that try to sell the idea that breathing ozone is actually healthy, but even low concentrations of ozone are harmful to health. It is well-documented that [ozone](https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/resources/ozone-and-health) (<https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/resources/ozone-and-health>) can cause respiratory tract irritation and inflammation, serious breathing difficulty including asthma, permanent lung damage, and cardiovascular effects. Ozone generators are illegal for most uses in California. There are some limited legal uses of these devices under controlled conditions in vacant spaces to kill pathogens and neutralize odors, but they should never be used in any space where people may be present.

Other things to consider

Cost: Air cleaners and replacement filters are expensive, so we encourage agencies and organizations to provide air cleaners to community members when possible. If your program is unable to buy air cleaners, you can inform clients about less expensive options like the DIY box fan. This toolkit contains a construction guide for a DIY box fan. There are very effective air cleaners for \$250 or less.

Energy efficiency: The Energy Star label means that the product uses energy efficiently. This saves money and helps the environment.

Noise level: Air cleaners work best at their highest fan speed. However, they may also be loud. During a poor air quality day, the cleaner should be on the highest setting for best results. Air cleaners that are above 55 decibels (dB) are quite noisy and will be unpleasant for most people.

Independent testing: Association of Home Appliance Manufacturers (AHAM) certification means that the product is independently tested & rated for its ability to clean the air. Manufacturers pay for AHAM to evaluate their products, so an air cleaner may still be good even if it is not certified by AHAM.

Additional Resources

Videos on how to use and maintain an air cleaner:

- English (https://youtu.be/oJ__8P3Bfks)
- Spanish (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fy6v2Pmrljo>)

4. HOW TO BUILD A LOW-COST AIR FILTER

Particulate matter in smoke from wildfires is unhealthy to breathe. A simple box fan filter will help keep your indoor air clean.

What you'll need:



Box fan



20"x20"x1" furnace filter
(MERV 13 or FPR 10)



Optional: Duct tape or bungee
cords

- 1 Place filter on back (air intake side) of fan.



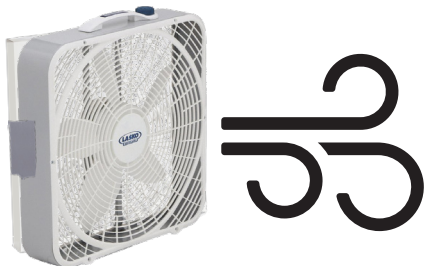
Make sure that the arrow on the side of the filter is pointing towards the fan.

- 2 Use the duct tape or bungee cords to attach the filter securely to the fan.



Use tape or cords only around the edges; do **not** block the air flow through the fan.

- 3 Place in an area away from any obstacles and turn the fan on.



Run the fan on high for a few hours if your indoor air quality is already poor, then turn it to medium to keep it clean.

- 4 Keep all windows and doors closed to prevent new pollution from getting into your home!



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WILDFIRE SMOKE FACTSHEET



5. How to Create a Clean Room at Home

When wildfire smoke gets inside your home it can make your indoor air unhealthy, but you can create a clean room to help protect your health and improve your indoor air quality. A clean room is a room that is set up to keep levels of smoke and other particles as low as possible during wildfire smoke events.

As long as it is safe to stay indoors at home, anyone can benefit from spending time in a clean room during a wildfire smoke event. A clean room may be most helpful for people who are at greater risk from the effects of smoke such as people with heart disease or lung disease, older adults, children, and pregnant women. This factsheet tells you how to set up a clean room at home.

Steps to Create a Clean Room at Home

1. **Choose a room.** Pick a room big enough for everyone in your household to be comfortable. A bedroom with an attached bathroom is a good choice.
2. **Prevent smoke from entering the room.** Close windows and doors, but don't do anything that makes it hard to get out.
3. **Stay cool.** Run fans, window air conditioners, or central air conditioning. If your air conditioner has a fresh air option, turn it off or close the intake and run it in recirculation mode.
4. **Filter the air in the room** when there is a smoke event. You will need to **buy or make an air-cleaning device before a smoke event, using one or more of the three ways on the top of the next page.**
5. **Avoid activities that create smoke or other particles indoors**, such as smoking, burning candles, using aerosols, frying food, and vacuuming, unless you use a vacuum with markings that say it has a high-efficiency particulate air (HEPA) filter. Use a damp cloth or mop to trap settled dust particles.
6. **Spend as much time as you can in the clean room** to get the most benefit from it. When the air quality improves, even temporarily, air out the clean room to freshen the air.

In Some Cases, It May Be Best to Seek Shelter Elsewhere

After you have followed the steps to create a clean room, if you can't stay cool at home, the power goes out, or too much smoke is still getting in your home, staying in a clean room may not be the best option for you. Consider staying with friends or family, going to a public cleaner air shelter, or seeking relief from the smoke in another location with air conditioning and good air filtration.

For more information:

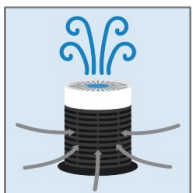
- Learn more about creating a clean room at home: <https://www.epa.gov/indoor-air-quality-iaq/create-clean-room-protect-indoor-air-quality-during-wildfire>
- See a video about how to set up a clean room at home: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V8DqzogXcVg>
- Other Wildfire Guide Factsheets: <https://www.airnow.gov/wildfire-guide-factsheets/>

Ways to Filter Air for Your Clean Room



Use a high-efficiency filter if your central heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) system can safely use one.

You may need to consult with an HVAC technician or the manufacturer of your system to find out whether a high-efficiency filter, marked with a minimum efficiency reporting value (MERV) of 13 or higher, will work with your system. Run the system's fan as often as you can.



Use a portable air cleaner in your clean room.

Make sure it is the right size for the clean room. One way is to choose a device with a clean air delivery rate (CADR) for tobacco smoke that is at least 2/3 the room area in square feet. Also, make sure that it doesn't generate ozone (List of Air Cleaning Devices certified by the California Air Resources Board: <https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/list-carb-certified-air-cleaning-devices>). Run it continuously on the highest fan setting.



Use a do-it-yourself (DIY) air cleaner in your clean room.

A DIY air cleaner can be an inexpensive, temporary option to clean the air. See below for instructions on how to make one, including important safety tips.

*Filter Graphics
from Santa
Barbara County
Air Pollution
Control District*

If You Choose to Use a DIY Air Cleaner...

- **If you can, get a portable air cleaner. It is likely to reduce particle concentrations better than a DIY air cleaner,** especially in larger rooms. There is limited evidence on the effectiveness of DIY air cleaners. A DIY air cleaner will be most useful in a smaller room where you spend a significant amount of time and can run it longer, such as a bedroom.
- **To make your own DIY air cleaner, use a newer box fan (made since 2012) with a UL or ETL logo: these fans have thermal safety fuses** that reduce the risk of fires or burns from overheating the fan's motor and outer surfaces. Look for fans that have a listing for electrical safety and have a mark from a certifying organization such as UL or Intertek (the label will show the UL logo or Intertek's ETL logo, for example). Do not use a box fan manufactured before 2012 (unless you know it has a thermal safety fuse) in a DIY air cleaner. If you must use an older fan, never leave the fan running unattended, while you are away or sleeping.
- **When assembling a DIY air cleaner, choose a high-efficiency filter, preferably rated MERV 13 or higher, for better filtration.** Align the arrows on the filter with the direction of the air flow through the fan. Try to get a good seal between the fan and the filter. Change the filter when it appears dirty or starts to release smoke odors.
- There are many ways to put together a DIY air cleaner. Some common designs are:
 - One filter flat against the fan (video from Washington Dept of Ecology): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ujUFj2G9-Y>
 - Two filters taped with cardboard to form a triangle against the fan (video from the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ukyF2xm8cws>



6. Ways to Check your Air Quality

Apps for your Mobile Device

Some popular apps are listed below. These apps all use quality data sources and the Air Quality Index (AQI). Some things to keep in mind:













- Some apps have “widgets” that can be placed on your home screen, so that you can see air quality information at a glance.
- You may have to manually turn on air quality alerts, and you may have to give permission for the app to access your location.
- Keep in mind that features may change over time.

App Name	iPhone	Android	Map	Alerts	Forecast	Widget	Spanish version	Comments
EPA AirNow	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	For iOS, be sure to choose the EPA version; there’s another version just called “AirNow” which is not the correct one. Click the “Smoke” icon to view a map with the most sensor data.
IQAir AirVisual	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
FEMA	✓	✓	✗	✓	✗	✗	✓	Will show alerts related to all types of disasters, not just air quality. Recently there is a bug causing errors in showing alerts; the app may require reinstall if this happens.
Google Maps	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗	✓	To view air quality, tap the Layers icon (looks like two stacked sheets of paper) then “Air Quality.”

See the next page for websites to check air quality.

Websites

The following are some examples of websites that will display current or future air quality information. If you prefer to check a website on your phone rather than download an app, you can bookmark the website to your phone's home screen.

Website	Map	Forecast	Description
airnow.gov			Shows current air quality and a 4-day air quality forecast.
fire.airnow.gov			Shows a detailed map with local air quality sensor information, current fire details, and smoke plumes.
map.purpleair.com			Shows a detailed map with local air quality sensor information. You can view past air quality information by clicking on a sensor. The data and colors used on this map are slightly different from the government-run websites, and may make the air quality seem a bit worse.
wasmoke.blogspot.com			Displays current air quality map and frequent blog posts related to wildfires and the smoke season in Washington. A great place to check if you're interested in tracking specific fires.
weather.com			A weather website that also has air quality and allergen information. For air quality, click "More Forecasts" at the upper right of your screen, then "Air Quality Forecast." Even though they call this a "forecast," it does not actually give predictions for future air quality.
google.com/maps			To view current air quality, click "Layers," then "More," then "Air Quality."

7. Indoor Smoky Day Activities

Write down a few ideas of what your child might like to do if cooped up indoors. This can be something they already enjoy to do on a daily basis, or something new, interesting or special that's reserved just for smoky days or bad weather. Think about some activities that you can do together with your child, and others that don't require much supervision. Here are some examples:

- Puzzles or board games
- Arts and crafts projects – think about creating “kits” ahead of time that you can pull out at a moment's notice
- Coloring books
- Activity books
- Indoor dance party
- Cook a favorite food together
- Building toys – such as Legos, Duplos, blocks, magnetic tiles
- Build a blanket fort or a special “cozy corner” with your child
- Reading – you could consider reserving some special books for this, such as comics/graphic novels

Remember that when air quality is Hazardous outdoors (that is, AQI is 301+), it's important to keep indoor activity levels low. This is also true if your child is having any asthma symptoms or other physical symptoms from wildfire smoke.

Clean Air Places Outside my Home

Clean indoor air places are places in your community that are likely to have good air quality. These are generally buildings that have good ventilation and have an air conditioning unit, and that don't have doors or windows that are constantly opening. Many public buildings may meet these criteria. It's a good idea to have a list of places you might go in case your child gets tired of being indoors, or if the air quality in your home gets worse because of smoke. Also remember that if your indoor air quality is bad and you're not able to improve it, it is a good idea to think about evacuating.

Things to consider when choosing a place:

- How would you get there? If you need to walk a long way or bike to the other location, it may not be the best choice (it's best to limit physical activity outdoors when the air quality is bad). Taking the bus or train, or driving, would be better.
- How much does it cost? Many of the above places are free, but some may require admission.
- How long can we stay? Some public places will allow you to stay the entire day.

Here are some examples:

- Community center
- Library
- Shopping mall
- A friend's home
- Cooling center
- YMCA
- Museum or aquarium

Cooling centers can be a good choice, because they will usually also have good air quality. Cooling centers are not always open year-round or available in every community, so check this website for the most recent information, and type in your location for the most results:

https://search.wa211.org/search?query=TH-2600.1900-180&query_label=Extreme+Heat+Cooling+Centers&query_type=taxonomy

When you're going somewhere outside your home, have your child **wear an N95 mask** when they are outdoors. Remember to **put your air conditioner on “recirculate” while in the car**, if you have that option.



8. What if it's hot indoors and I don't have air conditioning?

It can be a challenge to keep smoke out when it's hot, especially without an air conditioner or central cooling system. Pay attention to rising temperatures, as heat-related illness can occur quickly and can be life threatening. If it's hot indoors during poor air quality, these steps can help you stay cool:

- Close windows, curtains, and shades during the day and use portable fans.
- Minimize your use of the stove and oven during the hottest parts of the day.
- Take a cool bath or shower. Be mindful of extreme temperature changes, which can cause life-threatening issues.
- Use ice packs or put your feet in cool water. Apply wet rags on the back of your neck or mist yourself with water while sitting near a fan.
- Stay hydrated, especially with water. Avoid sugary or alcoholic drinks since these can be dehydrating.
- Go to a cooler indoor place – even if only for a few hours. For updated information on cooling centers in your community, visit [Washington 2-1-1](https://search.wa211.org/en/search?location=Washington%2C+Estados+Unidos&query=TH-2600.1900-180&query_type=taxonomy&query_label=Extreme+Heat+Cooling+Centers&coords=-120.094293%2C48.025005) (https://search.wa211.org/en/search?location=Washington%2C+Estados+Unidos&query=TH-2600.1900-180&query_type=taxonomy&query_label=Extreme+Heat+Cooling+Centers&coords=-120.094293%2C48.025005).
- Track the air quality and open your windows when the air quality improves.
- Only open windows when it is cooler outside than inside. An open window is most effective when a door or additional window can be opened to provide a cross draft.
- Take steps to filter indoor air.

More information about preventing heat-related illness:

DOH's hot weather safety guidance:

<https://doh.wa.gov/emergencies/be-prepared-be-safe/severe-weather-and-natural-disasters/extreme-heat/hot-weather-precautions>

CDC's Preventing Heat-Related Illness:

https://www.cdc.gov/heat-health/about/index.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fextreme-heat%2Fprevention%2Findex.html

Source: <https://doh.wa.gov/community-and-environment/air-quality/smoke-fires> (Accessed Aug. 21, 2025)

9. **Are some people more affected than others?**

- Not everyone exposed to wildfire smoke will experience health problems. Age, individual susceptibility, including the presence or absence of preexisting heart or lung disease (e.g., asthma or COPD), and other factors determine whether someone will experience smoke-related health problems.
- Most healthy adults and children will recover quickly from smoke exposure and will not suffer long-term health consequences. Some sensitive individuals may experience more severe acute and chronic symptoms.
- **Children, pregnant women, older adults**, and people who are sensitive to air pollutants (such as **those with pre-existing heart and lung conditions**) should take precautions to limit their exposure to wildfire smoke.
- Sensitive individuals concerned about potential health consequences from wildfire smoke exposure should discuss this with their physician and monitor the Air Quality Index daily for air quality forecasts and ways to reduce exposure.

Source: <https://espanol.epa.gov/espanol/preguntas-frecuentes-acerca-del-humo-de-los-incendios-forestales#personas>