

Health Related Information on Wildfires and Air Quality

Wildfire smoke has harmful chemicals that can affect your health. It can cause eye and throat irritation, coughing, and difficulty breathing. **People who are at greatest risk of experiencing symptoms due to smoke include those with chronic lung disease (such as asthma) and/or heart disease, young children, pregnant women, and older adults.** Even healthy adults can be affected by smoke. Seek medical help if you have symptoms that worsen or become severe.

If you *smell* or *see smoke*, take these steps to protect your health:

- Minimize or stop outdoor activities, especially exercise.
- Stay indoors with windows and doors closed.
- Keep vehicle windows and vents closed.
- Individuals with asthma or other respiratory conditions may benefit from the use of a humidifier in the home or by wearing a surgical-style paper mask when out-of-doors.
- Seek medical attention if symptoms such as coughing, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, wheezing, chest tightness or pain, palpitations, nausea, unusual fatigue or lightheadedness persist or worsen.

If you have any chronic lung disease (including asthma) or heart disease, closely monitor your health and contact your doctor immediately if you have symptoms that worsen, including repeated coughing, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, wheezing, chest tightness or pain, palpitations, nausea, unusual fatigue or lightheadedness. Consider going to an emergency shelter or leaving the area until smoke conditions improve.

Contact your doctor to discuss what you should do if smoke becomes worse in your area, especially if you have lung disease (including asthma), heart disease, are elderly, pregnant, or have children in your home.

Keep informed regarding the latest air quality announcements.

Click [*here*](#) to read the Merced County Department's *08-28-13 News Release* regarding the Health Advisory sent out on wildfire smoke and air quality.

Click [*here*](#) to read the Merced County Department's *08-28-13 Health Advisory* on health related information on wildfires and air quality.

For current air quality information, please visit the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (Valley Air District) website at <http://www.valleyair.org/Home.htm> or call the Northern Region Office at (209) 557-6472.

Sign up for the Valley Air District's *Real-time Air Advisory Network (RAAN)* to receive hourly air quality information for your area. [Click here for latest Merced Air Monitoring Data](#)

For the latest information on the Rim Fire (affecting Tuolumne, Mariposa, Stanislaus, and Merced, counties), visit the InciWeb (interagency all-risk incident information management system) website at <http://www.inciweb.org/incident/3660/>

For information on the health impacts of smoke, visit the California Air Pollution Control Officer's Association *Smoke Impact Web Page* at <http://www.airquality.org/smokeimpact/>