



DEALING WITH SMOKE

TIPS FOR CHILDREN

FROM THE AIR DISTRICTS OF THE SACRAMENTO REGION

As fire agencies battle wildfires in the area, there are things you can do to protect children’s health from the harmful pollutants filling the air due to wildfire smoke.

Children are more sensitive to air pollution for several reasons. First, their respiratory systems are still developing. Children also breathe more air per pound of bodyweight than adults. Lastly, they are more active outdoors, thus increasing their exposure to outdoor pollutants.

While the ash and smoke from wildfires are visible reminders of the pollution impacting an area, be even more cautious of the fine particles within smoke that you can’t see. These particles, which are invisible to the naked eye, bypass our body’s natural defense system and lodge in our lungs.

Smoke can cause coughing, a scratchy throat, headaches and sinus irritation. Over the long-term, smoke can decrease lung function and make the body more susceptible to developing diseases such as asthma, bronchitis, emphysema and possibly cancer.

Here are some tips you can follow to protect children from unhealthy air:

- ✓ **Stay indoors.** Limit their exposure to poor air quality conditions as much as possible. Keep your windows and doors closed. Use your air conditioning system and place it on recirculation mode, if available.
- ✓ **Play indoors.** Choose indoor options for children.
- ✓ **Reduce outdoor activity.** Reducing outdoor physical activity lowers the amount of polluted air your body intakes. Schools and day care centers should curtail outdoor activities and events that involve prolonged exposure and strenuous exercise or sports participation.
- ✓ **Consult a physician.** If your child suffers from a heart or lung ailment, or other chronic disease, talk with a doctor. Your physician can advise you on treatment or whether and when you should leave the area. Call a doctor immediately if your child’s condition worsens.
- ✓ **Have a plan.** Keep an adequate supply of your child’s medications (five days or more) on hand. If your child suffers from asthma, have a written asthma management plan available.
- ✓ **Stay alert.** Listen to your local news, weather forecasts and air quality alerts provided by the local air district or through the Sacramento region’s Spare The Air program. If the air quality in your area worsens, take necessary precautions to protect your child’s health.



If you have air quality questions, please call your local air district:

- El Dorado County Air Quality Management District - (530) 621-7501
- Feather River Air Quality Management District (Yuba and Sutter Counties) - (530) 634-7659
- Placer County Air Pollution Control District - (530) 745-2330
- Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District - (916) 874-4800 or (800) 880-9025
- Yolo-Solano Air Quality Management District - (530) 757-3650