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## **High Temperatures and Smoky Air Could Cause Health Problems**

Oregon Public Health officials urge people across the state to take precautions as temperatures and the air quality reach potentially unhealthy levels.

The National Weather Service is predicting weather that could bring wildfire smoke to communities throughout Oregon. Smoke levels can rise and fall depending on weather factors including wind direction.

“The combination of high temperatures and wildfire smoke in many areas throughout Oregon may increase the risk of illness especially for people with asthma, respiratory or heart conditions, older adults, and young children,” said Bruce Gutelius, M.D., M.P.H., deputy state epidemiologist, Oregon Public Health Division.

Public Health officials urge all Oregonians, especially children, older adults and people with lung or heart disease to take the following precautions to avoid health problems:

- Check the local Air Quality Index for information about your community’s conditions.
- Reduce the amount of time spent outdoors. This can usually provide some protection, especially in a tightly closed, air-conditioned house in which the air conditioner can be set to re-circulate air instead of bringing in outdoor air. Staying inside with the doors and windows closed can usually reduce exposure.
- Reduce the amount of time engaged in vigorous outdoor physical activity. This can be an important and effective strategy to lower the dose of inhaled air pollutants and minimize health risks during a smoke event.
- Reduce other sources of indoor air pollution. Some indoor sources of air pollution can emit large amounts of the same pollutants present in wildfire

smoke. Indoor sources such as burning cigarettes, gas, propane and wood-burning stoves and furnaces, and activities such as cooking, burning candles and vacuuming can greatly increase the particle levels in a home. These sources of indoor air pollution should be avoided during high pollution or when wildfire smoke is present.

- Individuals with lung diseases such as asthma should follow their health care provider's advice about prevention and treatment of symptoms.

For more information about air quality; how to protect your health during the forest fire season; and how to protect your health when temperatures soar visit the following websites:

How to use visibility to measure risk of health effects:  
[www.deq.state.or.us/aq/burning/wildfires/visibility.htm](http://www.deq.state.or.us/aq/burning/wildfires/visibility.htm) on

Air Quality Index:  
[http://www.epa.gov/airnow/aqi\\_brochure\\_08-09.pdf](http://www.epa.gov/airnow/aqi_brochure_08-09.pdf)

Air quality advisories from the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ):  
<http://www.deq.state.or.us/aq/advisories/index.htm>

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