



Richard Berry, Mayor

City of Albuquerque
Environmental Health Department
Air Quality Division
One Civic Plaza NW, Room 3047
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Mary Lou Leonard, Director

AIR QUALITY ALERT DUE TO WILDFIRE SMOKE

Issue time: Friday, July 1, 2011 at 9:00 AM

The Environmental Health Department's Air Quality Division is issuing a notice due to wildfire smoke that may cause elevated particulate matter. This notice is in effect for the following period:

Friday, July 1, 2011 at 9:00 AM

to

Friday, July 1, 2011 at 2:00 PM

Due to the wildfire Smoke from the Las Conchas fire in northern New Mexico, air quality may continue to be adversely affected in the Albuquerque area. The City of Albuquerque Environmental Health Department recommends that all individuals take precautions when outdoors in areas where there may be visible smoke or the odor of smoke. Smoke levels are anticipated to increase late this afternoon or early evening and last several hours with air quality deteriorating. Smoke levels are expected to decrease by mid-afternoon.

When significant smoke and odor exists residents in the Albuquerque area should avoid physical activity outdoors. People with heart or lung disease, older adults and children should remain indoors and keep activity levels low when they see or smell smoke.

The Environmental Health Department recommends using air conditioning systems that are able to recirculate indoor air, and if possible a high-efficiency particulate air (HEPA) filter on these systems to reduce smoke particles entering the indoor air. A HEPA filter may reduce the number of irritating fine particles in indoor air. When smoke levels are high, do not burn candles, fireplaces, or gas stoves. Do not vacuum because vacuuming can stir up particles already inside your home.

During periods of visible smoke or when the odor of smoke exists, the following actions are recommended, especially for individuals sensitive to particulate pollution:

- ✓ Minimize or stop outdoor activities, especially, exercise.
- ✓ Stay indoors with windows and doors closed.
 - Do not run fans that bring smoky outdoor air inside which could, include swamp coolers, "whole-house" fans or "fresh air ventilation systems."
 - Run your air-conditioner or swamp cooler, only if it does not bring in smoke from outdoors. Change the standard air-conditioner filter medium

or high efficiency filter. If you have a wall-unit or window-unit air conditioner, set it to “re-circulate.”

- ✓ **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, unusual fatigue or lightheadedness. Consider going to a location with refrigerated air or leaving the area until smoke conditions improve.

If you do not have air conditioning, take these additional steps to protect yourself and your family from heat exhaustion, which can be especially dangerous for infants, children, the elderly, and people with chronic disease.

- ✓ Lower body temperature by using cold compresses, misting, and taking cool showers, baths, or sponge baths.
- ✓ Drink plenty of fluids. Don't wait until you're thirsty to drink. However, if your doctor has told you to limit the amount you drink or you are taking water pills, ask your doctor how much you should drink during the heat.
- ✓ Avoid drinks with alcohol or large amounts of sugar, as these can promote dehydration.
- ✓ Consider moving to location that has air conditioning.
- ✓ Do not exercise or perform physical activity.
- ✓ Wear light-weight and light colored clothing.
- ✓ Watch for signs of heat exhaustion, including fatigue, nausea, headache, and vomiting, and contact your doctor immediately if these occur.

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.

The Environmental Health Department's Air Quality Division will continue to monitor weather patterns for the Albuquerque area, and will issue additional alerts throughout the week as necessary.

For Further information, please visit the City of Albuquerque Air Quality website at <http://www.cabq.gov/airquality/>

For daily Air Quality Index information, call (505) 768-4734 or (505) 766-7664.