



SAFETY FLASH

6-14-2011 **Tip of the Day:** Visit <http://nmfireinfo.wordpress.com/> for timely and accurate fire and restriction information for the entire State of New Mexico.

Health Threat from Wildfire Smoke

The Center for Disease Control (CDC) warns that smoke from wildfires is a mixture of gases and fine particles from burning trees and other plant materials. Smoke can hurt your eyes, irritate your respiratory system, and worsen chronic heart and lung diseases.

Special Weather Statement for Southern Desert, NM

"POOR AIR QUALITY TO CONTINUE ACROSS MUCH OF SOUTHWEST AND SOUTH CENTRAL NEW MEXICO AND FAR WEST TEXAS DUE TO WILDFIRE SMOKE.... INCREASED SMOKE CONCENTRATIONS COULD LEAD TO AIR QUALITY THAT IS UNHEALTHY FOR SENSITIVE GROUPS... INCLUDING THOSE WITH ASTHMA... LUNG OR HEART DISEASE... CHILDREN AND PREGNANT WOMEN. TAKE THIS INTO CONSIDERATION WHEN DECIDING WHETHER OR NOT TO PARTICIPATE IN OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES THIS WEEK.

THE AIR QUALITY BUREAU OF THE NEW MEXICO ENVIRONMENTAL DEPARTMENT HAS ESTABLISHED GUIDELINES TO DETERMINE AIR QUALITY VISUALLY. YOUR EYES ARE YOUR BEST TOOLS TO DETERMINE IF IT IS SAFE TO BE OUTSIDE." (National Weather Service, El Paso, TX, Mon, 6/13/11)

Visibility in miles	When the Air Quality Index (AQI) is:	...air quality conditions are:	...as symbolized by this color:
3 - 5	101 to 150	Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups	Orange
1.5 - 3	151 to 200	Unhealthy	Red
1 - 1.5	201 to 300	Very Unhealthy	Purple
1 or less	301 to 500	Hazardous	Maroon

SYMPTOMS (according to CDC Wildfire FACT SHEET)

- Coughing
- A scratchy throat
- Irritated sinuses
- Shortness of breath
- Chest pain
- Headaches
- Stinging eyes
- A runny nose
- Asthma exacerbations



If symptoms worsen contact your doctor or go to an urgent care provider.

PREVENTION (according to Arizona Dept. of Health Services, Wallow Fire Air Quality Bulletin, June 8, 2011)

Stay alert to any news coverage or health warnings related to smoke.

The most effective way to reduce exposure is to stay indoors when air quality is in the "unhealthy range".

If you must be outside in a smoky area, healthy individuals may wish to wear a mask that has two straps and has the words NIOSH N95 or NIOSH P100 printed on it and follow the manufacturer's instructions carefully. These types of mask can usually be found at hardware stores. Do Not Use: bandanas (wet or dry), paper masks or a tissue held over mouth & nose.