



Cal/OSHA Notice - Worker Health and Safety in Wildfire Regions

October 14, 2017

Smoke from wildfires contains chemicals, gases and fine particles that can harm health. The greatest hazard comes from breathing fine particles, which can reduce lung function, worsen asthma and other existing heart and lung conditions, and cause coughing, wheezing and difficulty breathing.

Cal/OSHA has [posted materials](#) that provide guidance for employers and workers on working safely in conditions with heavy smoke caused by the wildfires. Employers with operations exposed to wildfire smoke must consider taking appropriate measures as part of their Injury and Illness Prevention Program under Title 8 [section 3203](#) of the California Code of Regulations and as required under [section 5141](#) (Control of Harmful Exposure to Employees). Those measures include:

- Engineering controls whenever feasible (for example, using a filtered ventilation system in indoor work areas)
- Administrative controls if practicable (for example, limiting the time that employees work outdoors)
- Providing workers with respiratory protective equipment, such as disposable filtering facepieces (dust masks).
 - To filter out fine particles, respirators must be labeled N-95, N-99, N-100, R-95, P-95, P-99, or P-100, and must be labeled approved by the US National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH).
 - Approved respiratory protective equipment is necessary for employees working in outdoor locations designated by local air quality management districts as “Very Unhealthy,” “Unhealthy” or “Hazardous.”
 - It takes more effort to breathe through a respirator, and it can increase the risk of heat stress. Frequent breaks are advised. Workers feeling dizzy, faint or nauseous are advised to go to a clean area, remove the respirator and seek medical attention.
 - Respirators should be discarded if they become difficult to breathe through or if the inside becomes dirty.



- N95 respirator masks are available at the following County Emergency Operations Centers:

Butte County OEM EOC 25 County Center Dr , Suite 213 Oroville CA	Lake County OES EOC 1375 Hoyt Ave. Lakeport, CA 95453	Mendocino County OES EOC 951 Low Gap Rd. Ukiah, CA 95482-3764
Napa County OES EOC 1535 Airport Blvd. Napa, CA 94558	Napa County Airport State Staging Area (SSA) 2000 Airport Road Napa, CA 94558	Nevada County EOC EOC 155 Glasson Way Grass Valley, CA
Santa Rosa DRC DRC 427 Mendocino Ave. Santa Rosa, CA 95401-6313	Sonoma County EOC 600 Administration Dr. Santa Rosa, CA 95403	Travis Air Force Base (AFB) FSA 400 Brennan Circle Travis AFB, CA 94535
Yuba County OES EOC 915 8th St., Suite 117 Marysville CA	FEMA Region IX Office 1111 Broadway, Suite 1200 Oakland, CA 94607	

For more information, please visit the [Food and Drug Administration page.](#)