

October 11, 2017



## **Contra Costa County – Air Quality Concerns**

The Bay Area Air Quality Management District has issued a health advisory for the Bay Area due to unhealthy air quality from the wildfires in the North Bay.

People with preexisting health conditions, respiratory illness, young children, the elderly, and those who are pregnant should take precautions.

If you see or smell smoke, follow these tips to stay healthy and safe.

- Set air conditioning units and car ventilation systems to “recirculate”
- Limit outdoor activity and stay indoors whenever possible
- Close all windows and doors – keep outside air out!

Contact your healthcare provider if you experience symptoms such as:

- Persistent coughing, difficulty breathing or wheezing
- Chest tightness
- Palpitations (rapid or irregular heartbeat)
- Nausea, fatigue or lightheadedness

There are many worthy ways to help people affected by the wildfires. If you choose to give, please keep in mind that the resource most useful to the nonprofits and other groups serving fire victims is money rather than items or goods.

### **Masks**

Contra Costa Health Services does not recommend using commercially available surgical or dust masks to protect against smoky air – most are not effective at stopping particulate matter from the smoke.

Inside air is better than outside air and we recommend people stay indoors and keep outside air out.

An N-95 mask, when properly worn – tightly sealed around the nose and mouth – may provide some protection. However, N-95 masks are not suitable for children and, once removed, are not reusable because smoky air can contaminate the inside of the mask.

Anyone with a respiratory condition should check with their healthcare provider before using a mask.

For information or safety tips regarding local air quality, visit the Bay Area Air Quality Management District at [www.baaqmd.gov](http://www.baaqmd.gov), or visit [www.cchealth.org](http://www.cchealth.org)

For up-to-date information about air quality in your zip code, visit [www.airnow.gov](http://www.airnow.gov)