Pueblo City-County Health Department

NEWS

www.pueblohealthdept.org
101 W. 9th Street, Pueblo, CO 81003

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Air Quality Health Advisory
Due to Wildfire

The Pueblo City-County Health Department cautions people about poor air quality that may cause breathing difficulties, especially for people susceptible to respiratory conditions.

“In general, if you can see or smell smoke, it is recommended that you avoid outdoor physical activities,” stated Sylvia Proud, Public Health Director at the Pueblo City-County Health Department. She added, “If visibility is decreased in your neighborhood to less than five miles, smoke has reached levels that are unhealthy.”

Children, Elderly, and People with Respiratory Conditions

- If you can see or smell smoke, children, elderly, pregnant women, and people with pre-existing respiratory conditions and heart disease should stay inside with the windows and doors closed.
- If you need to run a cooling or heating system keep the fresh-air intake closed and the filter clean to prevent outdoor smoke from getting inside. If you do not have an air conditioner and it is too warm to stay inside with the windows closed, try to get involved in activities that offer air conditioning, such as public places (library, mall, etc.).
- Drink plenty of water. Avoid alcohol or liquids containing high amounts of sugars.
- Children are more likely to be affected by health threats from smoke because their airways are still developing and because they breathe more air per pound of body weight than adults. Children also are more likely to be active outdoors.
- Older adults are more likely to be affected by smoke, as they have higher levels of heart or lung diseases than younger people.
- Follow your doctor's advice about medicines and about your respiratory management plan if you have asthma or another chronic obstructive pulmonary disease. Call your doctor if your symptoms worsen.

Healthy Individuals

- When smoke levels are high, even healthy people may experience coughing, a scratchy throat, irritated sinuses, shortness of breath, chest pain, headaches, stinging eyes, and a runny nose. If you can see or smell smoke, you should limit outdoor physical activities and stay indoors if at all possible.
- Wildfire smoke contains pollutants that can be harmful to health. Particles from smoke tend to be very small and can therefore be inhaled deep into the lung and may represent a greater health concern than larger particles. Even in healthy people, this can cause temporary reductions in lung function and pulmonary inflammation. This can also affect the body’s immune system.

Information is available online at the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment’s website www.colorado.gov/airquality/advisory.aspx.

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