

# Recommendations for Outdoor Physical Activity during Smoky Conditions

This guide is intended to help you make decisions on outdoor activities when it's smoky outside.  
Group information is listed below.

| Length of Outdoor Physical Activity | Good for Groups (1 – 3) | Moderate for Group 1 Individuals                                | Unhealthy for Group 1 & 2 Individuals  | Unhealthy for Group 1 - 3 Individuals   | Very Unhealthy for Group 1 - 3 Individuals                  | Hazardous for Group 1 – 3 Individuals                       |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------|---|--|---|---|---|
|                                     | Visibility > 10 miles   | Visibility 5 - 10 miles   | Visibility 3 – 5 miles   | Visibility 1.5 – 3 miles  | Visibility 1 – 1.5 miles                                    | Visibility < 1 mile   |
| 30 Minutes                          | No Restrictions         | Group 1 Individuals should monitor or reduce physical activity. | Groups 1 & 2 should limit time spent outdoors or reduce physical activity.               | Groups 1 & 2 should avoid the outdoors and Group 3 should reduce physical activity. | All Groups should avoid the outdoors and physical activity. | All Groups should avoid the outdoors and physical activity. |
| 1 Hour                              | No Restrictions         | Group 1 Individuals should monitor or reduce physical activity. | Groups 1 & 2 should considerably limit time spent outdoors and reduce physical activity. | All Groups should avoid the outdoors and physical activity.                         |   |   |
| 2 Hours or More                     | No Restrictions         | Group 1 Individuals should limit prolonged physical activity.   | Groups 1 & 2 should avoid the outdoors and Group 3 should reduce physical activity.      | All Groups should avoid the outdoors and physical activity.                         |   |   |

## WHICH GROUP ARE YOU IN?

| <u>Group 1 Individuals</u>   | <u>Group 2 Individuals</u>  | <u>Group 3 Individuals</u>   |
|--|---|--|
| This group includes those with respiratory or heart disease, angina, pulmonary disease, asthma, emphysema or any other disease that may be impacted by any level of smoke. | This group includes those with asthma, or recent respiratory infections, those who experience seasonal allergies, work outside, or in general are more sensitive to the acute effects of smoke. | This group includes those who are more resistant to the short term effects of smoke. Healthy people may also experience adverse effects of smoke depending on duration and exposure. |

Graphic created by: Placer County APCD

Great Basin Unified Air  
Pollution Control District



## Points to Consider

- ◆ If you smell smoke, or see smoke around you, consider restricting your outdoor activities.
- ◆ The chance of being affected by smoke increases substantially with strenuous or prolonged activity outdoors.
- ◆ Keep in mind that air quality can change rapidly at different times during the day due to wind shifts. It is important to monitor the smoke throughout the day in your area and make plans for outdoor activities accordingly.



**Local visibility can be used to determine air quality in your area! It's a great way for you to decide whether it's safe to go outside when it's smoky.**

Not every community has a monitor that measures particle levels in the air. It's up to you to decide whether to change your outdoor plans until smoke

conditions improve. The chart on the front of this card has the visibility information for each level. Facing away from the sun, if you can, focus on a local ridge top, building, or landmark which is approximately 3 to 6 miles away and determine how far you can see. This can help you to visually assess the quality of the air. If you are concerned about poor outdoor air quality, consider waiting for better conditions. Your health and the health of your family should always be first priority.

### **Dust masks do not protect you from smoke impacts!**

Paper "comfort" or "dust" masks – the kinds you can commonly buy at the hardware store – are designed to trap large particles, such as sawdust. These masks generally will not protect your lungs from the fine particles in smoke; in addition they may restrict airflow. Also, wet bandanas tied over the face will not protect you from fine particles and may restrict air flow.

**If there is an advisory to stay indoors,** take steps to keep indoor air as clean as possible. Keep your windows and doors closed – unless it's extremely hot outside. Run your air conditioner, if you have one, keeping the filter clean, and keeping the fresh air intake closed (recirculation mode) to prevent bringing additional smoke inside.

*Note:* If you don't have an air conditioner, staying inside with the windows closed may be dangerous in extremely hot weather. In these cases, seek alternative shelter such as going to a mall, the movies, or libraries. Often, when smoky conditions continue over an extended time, your local government may provide cooling centers to go to in order to avoid smoke exposure and heat. Contact your local government for further information.

