Prepare for Wildfire Smoke & Unhealthy Air Quality

East Wenatchee, WA – Public Health officials urge residents to prepare for smoky days and unhealthy air quality conditions. Wildfire smoke can cause serious health problems, especially for at risk people including: children, pregnant women, adults older than 65, and people with heart and lung diseases or respiratory illnesses.

The best way to protect your and your family’s health during a wildfire is to limit time spent outdoors. However, wildfire smoke can also work its way inside your home which is why indoor air filtration is extremely important. The following are steps you can take to improve the air quality inside your home:

- Keep windows and doors closed to avoid smoky air from coming inside
- Upgrade filters on existing HVAC (Heating, Ventilation & Air Conditioning) systems to either a HEPA (High Efficiency Particulate Air) filter or a filter rated 11 or higher on the MERV (Minimum Efficiency Reporting Value) scale
- Avoid bringing outdoor air inside by setting air conditioner(s) to “recirculate”
- Avoid adding indoor air pollution and do not vacuum, use candles, or smoke
- Use a portable air cleaner with a HEPA (High Efficiency Particulate Air) filter

In addition to indoor air quality preparedness, stay informed of the latest wildfires and air quality information by visiting the Washington Smoke Blog. Remain aware of smoky conditions and follow the precautions stated in the Washington Air Quality Advisory. Contact your healthcare provider if you have any specific questions related to your or your family’s health.

Additional Resources:

Chelan-Douglas Health District
Washington State Department of Health

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