

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 23, 2018

Wildfires Create Hazardous Air Quality Concern in Basin

KLAMATH FALLS, Ore. – Smoke intrusion from regional wildfires has created hazardous air quality concerns in Klamath County. Public Health encourages Klamath County residents to take precautions to avoid health problems during hot, smoky conditions.

Winds, as forecasted by the Weather Service, may increase the already hazardous conditions in the Klamath Basin. Weather conditions and smoke levels can vary dramatically during wildfires. Conditions can change as frequently as on an hourly basis. Smoke may also impact one portion of a community but not another.

The combination of high temperatures and wildfire smoke in Klamath County may increase the risk of illness especially for people with asthma, respiratory or heart conditions, older adults, and young children. Public Health urges all residents, especially those at increased risk, to take the following precautions:

- Reduce the amount of time spent outdoors.
- Keep indoor locations tightly closed. If you have air conditioner, set it to re-circulate air instead of bringing in outdoor air.
- Reduce other sources of indoor air pollution such as burning cigarettes, gas, propane and wood burning stoves and furnaces, and activities such as cooking, burning candles and vacuuming
- Reduce the amount of time engaged in vigorous outdoor physical activity. This can be an important and effective strategy to lower the dose of inhaled air pollutants and minimize health risks during a smoke event.
- Drink plenty of water or other non-alcohol or decaffeinated fluids to keep cool.
- Individuals with lung disease or respiratory illnesses such as asthma should follow their health care provider's advice about prevention and treatment of symptoms.

Klamath County Public Health will continue to release information on our blog (www.klamathairquality.blogspot.com) and Facebook page (www.facebook.com/klamathbasinairquality) as smoke conditions change

For more information about air quality; how to protect your health during the forest fire season and how to protect your health when temperatures soar, visit the following website:

<http://public.health.oregon.gov/Preparedness/Prepare/Pages/PrepareForWildfire.aspx>

To learn how to use visibility to measure risk of health effects:

<http://www.oregon.gov/deq/aq/Pages/Wildfires-Visibility.aspx>

To learn how to use visibility to measure risk of health effects, visit

<http://www.oregon.gov/deq/aq/Pages/Wildfires-Visibility.aspx>.