



# News Release

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## Wildfire smoke will likely linger across Washington into the weekend

*Be proactive and take steps now to protect yourself from smoke*

**OLYMPIA** – Wildfire smoke is sticking around several parts of Washington and [forecasts](#) show smoke will likely get worse before it gets better. Breathing in smoke is not good for anyone. Days of consistent smoke exposure can take a toll on your health, making it especially important to protect yourself and those around you by staying alert and doing what you can to reduce smoke exposure.

When it's smoky outside, track air quality levels on the [Washington Smoke Information](#) website and follow related [health recommendations](#). Do your best to stay indoors and keep air clean by:

- Closing windows and doors unless it's too hot to maintain safe temperatures inside.
- Filtering indoor air, which is the best way to stay safe, especially during extended periods of smoke. You can do this using an HVAC system, HEPA portable air cleaner, or DIY box fan filter.
- Not adding to indoor air pollution, such as smoking or burning candles.
- Setting air conditioning units to recirculate.

If you must be outside, limit physical activity and wear a properly fitted, NIOSH-approved particulate respirator, such as an N95 mask. During smoke events it's also important to check on elderly loved ones and neighbors and keep pets indoors.

“It may be October, but it's clear we're not out of the woods when it comes to wildfire smoke and the dangers it can bring,” said Kaitlyn Kelly, Air Quality Policy Specialist. “While some parts of the state are experiencing unhealthy levels of air quality, we're also worried about the impacts of lower levels of smoke for extended periods of time. Don't wait until you start feeling symptoms to act.”

Those with pre-existing conditions are often affected the most. This includes people with heart and lung disease, people over 65 or under 18, pregnant people, outdoor workers, people of color, tribal and indigenous people, and people with low income. Minor symptoms include eye, nose, and throat irritation, headaches, wheezing, coughing, and shortness of breath. More serious symptoms include difficulty breathing, chest pain, and irregular heartbeat. Wildfire smoke can lead to hospitalization and death. Seek medical attention if your symptoms are severe.

For more information on how to protect yourself from wildfire smoke, visit the Washington State Department of Health's [Smoke from Fires webpage](#).

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