



Eastern Kern

Air Pollution Control District

Glen E. Stephens, P.E.
Air Pollution Control Officer

News Release

9-1-2020

For Immediate Release

TO: Local News, Health and Weather sections

Wildfire Smoke Health Advisory

Eastern Kern County residents are advised to restrict outdoor activities in smoke impacted areas

Duration: 9/1/2020 until 9/30/2020

Smoke from the several fires in California (including the SQF Complex Fire) have adversely effected all communities in Eastern Kern County. The elevated pollution levels have been noted in the Kern River Valley and Indian Wells Valley areas (including communities of Kernville, Wofford Heights, Lake Isabella, South Lake, Keyville, Bodfish, Miracle Hot Springs, Squirrel Mountain Valley, Weldon, Onyx, Canebrake, Inyokern, China Lake Acres, and Ridgecrest.)

The Eastern Kern Air Pollution Control District (District) is recommending that children, older individuals, and those with pre-existing heart and lung problems should avoid outdoor activity, whenever they can smell or see smoke in their immediate area. Effects can be as mild as a headache; eye, nose or throat irritation; or as serious as triggered asthma episodes or stresses on weakened cardiovascular systems. Adverse health impacts may also be seen in normally healthy individuals, if they are engaged in strenuous outdoor activities during periods of exposure to ground-level smoke.

Sensitive individuals should stay indoors in an air conditioned building with windows and doors closed whenever there is smoke at ground level in their area. Most residential central air conditioning systems re-circulate the air inside the home, so these can be operated normally; however, many commercial buildings and a small percentage of newer homes have mechanical ventilation systems that actively bring in outdoor air, and these should be set to a "re-circulate" mode, if available. If you are using a window air conditioner it should also be set to the "re-circulate" mode. Water or swamp coolers remove only a small portion of the smoke particles from the air that they bring in and provide little protection from the smoke. The District is recommending not use a swamp cooler that if there is smoke present in your area. Whole house fans should not be used until the threat of smoke impacts in your area is gone.

More information on the SQF Complex Fire can be found at the Fire Incident Information website: <https://inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident/7048/> .

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*Administrative Office: 2700 "M" Street, Suite 302, Bakersfield, CA 93301-2370
Phone (661) 862-5250 – Fax (661) 862-5251
www.kernair.org – ekapcd@kerncounty.com*