



Eastern Kern

Air Pollution Control District

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Air Pollution Control Officer

News Release

7-17-2024

For Immediate Release

TO: Local News, Health and Weather sections

Wildfire Smoke Health Advisory

Smoke from the Trout Fire (Tulare County) is severely impacting communities in the Indian Wells Valley, Inyokern, and Ridgecrest area.

The 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 using a swamp cooler 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 Trout Fire may be found at Trout Fire Status Update Reports on the Cal Fire website:

<https://osfm.fire.ca.gov/incidents/2024/7/13/trout-fire/updates>

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