

Wildfire Smoke Advisories in Place Across California

As a result of the Northern California Wildfires, air quality is falling into the UNHEALTHY range. Please be advised Cal/OSHA has implemented emergency regulations for wildfire smoke when working outside and the below summarizes some of its requirements.

1. Cal/OSHA Regulation

Cal/OSHA has an emergency regulation ([Section 5141.1](#)) to protect employees exposed to wildfire smoke. The regulation requires the following:

- Identification of harmful exposures.
- Communication.
- Training and instruction.
- Control of harmful exposures.
- Specific particulate sampling requirements if an employer opts to monitor employee exposure with a direct reading instrument.

Additional Resources

<https://www.dir.ca.gov/dosh/Worker-Health-and-Safety-in-Wildfire-Regions.html>

2. Applicability of Standard

A. Employers with workplaces and operations **must comply** with the full standard when both of the following conditions apply:

- The current AQI for PM2.5 is 151 or greater, regardless of the AQI for other pollutants.
- The employer should reasonably anticipate that employees may be exposed to wildfire smoke.

B. Employers with workplaces and operations in any of the following conditions are **exempt** from complying with section 5141.1:

- Enclosed buildings or structures in which the air is filtered by a mechanical ventilation system and the employer ensures that windows, doors, bays and other openings are kept closed to minimize contamination by outdoor or unfiltered air.
- Enclosed vehicles in which the air is filtered by a cabin air filter and the employer ensures that windows, doors and other openings are kept closed to minimize contamination by outdoor or unfiltered air.

- The employer demonstrates that the concentration of PM2.5 in the air does not exceed a concentration that corresponds to a current AQI of 151 or greater by measuring PM2.5 levels at the worksite in accordance with Appendix A.
- Employees exposed to a current AQI for PM2.5 of 151 or greater for a total of one hour or less during a shift.

Additional Resources

<https://www.dir.ca.gov/dosh/doshreg/Protection-from-Wildfire-Smoke/Wildfire-smoke-emergency-standard.html>

3. Air Quality Index and Poor Air Quality

Additionally, for areas that are experiencing poor air quality, employers must take the following steps to protect employees if the AQI for PM2.5 is 151 or greater.

- Communication: Inform employees of the AQI for PM2.5 and the protective measures available to them.
- Training: Train all employees on the information contained in [section 5141.1 Appendix B](#).
- Modifications: Implement modifications to the workplace, if feasible, to reduce exposure. Examples include providing enclosed structures or vehicles for employees to work in, where the air is filtered.
- Changes: Implement practicable changes to work procedures or schedules. Examples include changing the location where employees work or reducing the amount of time they work outdoors or exposed to unfiltered outdoor air.
- Respiratory protection: Provide proper respiratory protection equipment, such as disposable respirators, for voluntary use.
 - To filter out fine particles, respirators must be labeled N-95, N-99, N-100, R-95, P-95, P-99, or P-100, and must be labeled as approved by the US National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH).

For a list of current and projected AQI, please see the below link. Areas identified in **red** are experiencing AQI over 151 and are Unhealthy.

<https://www.airnow.gov/state/?name=california>