Wildfire/Outdoor Smoke and Particulates

OVERVIEW

Smoke from wildfires and other sources is a mixture of gases and fine particulates that can be harmful to the health of many individuals. This section outlines resources and guidance available to reduce the health impacts associated with wildfire/outdoor smoke and particulates.

SCOPE

The Washington State Department of Health (DOH) identifies people who are most likely to be affected by smoke. See the DOH Wildfire Smoke website at:

http://www.doh.wa.gov/CommunityandEnvironment/AirQuality/SmokeFromFires/WildfireSmoke

The Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology) identifies sensitive groups and recommends precautions based upon Ecology air quality categories and measured respirable particulate concentrations (also known as PM 2.5). See the Washington Air Quality Advisory (WAQA) website at:

http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/air/Air_Monitoring_Data/WAQA_Intro_Page.html

RESPONSIBILITY

WSU students, employees, event participants, guests, and visitors are responsible for following University policies and procedures in this section and the associated Wildfire/Outdoor Smoke and Particulates Program Document.

The program document provides guidance to reduce the health impacts associated with wildfire/outdoor smoke and particulates. Obtain copies by selecting the Program Document link from the Environmental Health and Safety (EH&S) Wildfire Smoke website at:

http://ehs.wsu.edu/PH/WildfireSmoke.html

Colleges, Departments, Units

WSU colleges, departments, and/or units are responsible for incorporating procedures and guidelines to reduce wildfire/outdoor smoke and particulates health impacts into unit-specific accident prevention programs. (See 2.10.) Refer to this policy and the Wildfire/Outdoor Smoke and Particulates Program Document for specific procedures and guidelines.

Departments are to work with Student Affairs—Access Center, Human Resource Services (HRS), or the Office for Equal Opportunity (OEO) to evaluate what, if any, options or reasonable accommodations may be provided to self-identified sensitive individuals.
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**Responsible Individuals**

For purposes of this section, the term "responsible individuals" includes, but is not limited to, professors, supervisors, coaches, and event hosts.

**Resource Referrals**

Responsible individuals should refer individuals who self-identify as susceptible to health issues from wildfire/outdoor smoke and particulate exposure to the appropriate University resources:

- **Students:** Student Affairs—Access Center; telephone 509-335-3417
  - **Employees:** Human Resource Services;
    - Pullman: telephone 509-335-4521
    - Spokane: telephone 509-358-7566
    - Tri-Cities: telephone 509-372-7302
    - Vancouver: telephone 360-546-9587
  - **Visitors:** Human Resource Services;
    - Pullman: telephone 509-335-4521
    - Spokane: telephone 509-358-7566
    - Tri-Cities: telephone 509-372-7302
    - Vancouver: telephone 360-546-9587
  - or Office for Equal Opportunity (OEO); telephone 509-335-8288

**Out-of-State Travel**

When traveling out of Washington state, responsible individuals must monitor the local air quality for unsafe conditions. Refer to the Wildfire/Outdoor Smoke and Particulates Program Document (see [6.56.1]) for useful air quality links regarding areas outside of Washington state.

**Self-Identified Sensitive Individuals**

Individuals in self-identified sensitive groups should limit time spent outdoors when Ecology's air quality index is "Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups" or worse.

Individuals who are sensitive to wildfire/outdoor smoke or particulates are to work with the appropriate University resources to address options. (See "Resource Referrals" above.)