



NEWS RELEASE

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Air District extends Spare the Air Alert through Wednesday

Wildfire smoke continues to cause unhealthy air quality

SAN FRANCISCO – The Bay Area Air Quality Management District is extending a Spare the Air Alert for wildfire smoke through Wednesday, August 26, which bans burning wood, manufactured fire logs or any other solid fuel, both indoors and outdoors.

Wildfire smoke from numerous fires inside and outside of the Bay Area is causing elevated levels of particulate pollution. Air quality is expected to be unhealthy with the heaviest impacts in the East Bay and Santa Clara Valley, although smoke impacts are possible throughout the region. It is illegal for Bay Area residents and businesses to use their fireplaces, wood stoves, pellet stoves, outdoor fire pits or any other wood-burning devices during a Spare the Air Alert for particulate pollution.

“Air quality in the Bay Area is being heavily impacted by smoke from wildfires that continue to burn throughout the region,” said Jack Broadbent, executive officer of the Air District. “In the midst of a pandemic, it is more important than ever for residents to limit time outdoors to protect their health.”

Spare the Air Alerts are issued when ozone or particulate matter pollution is forecast to reach unhealthy levels. If the smell of smoke is present or visible, it is important that Bay Area residents protect their health by avoiding exposure. If possible, stay inside with windows and doors closed until smoke levels subside. If temperatures are too hot indoors, visit an air-cooling center or other building that provides filtered air. It is also recommended that Bay Area residents set air conditioning units and car vent systems to re-circulate to prevent outside air from moving inside.

Smoke can irritate the eyes and airways, causing coughing, a dry scratchy throat and irritated sinuses. Elevated particulate matter in the air can trigger wheezing in those who suffer from asthma, emphysema or COPD. Elderly persons, children and individuals with respiratory illnesses are particularly susceptible to elevated air pollution levels and should take extra precautions to avoid exposure.

To find out when a Spare the Air Alert is in effect, residents can sign up for text alerts by texting the word “START” to 817-57, register for email AirAlerts at www.sparetheair.org, call 1(800) HELP-AIR, download the Spare the Air App or connect with Spare the Air on Facebook or Twitter.

The [Bay Area Air Quality Management District](http://www.bayareaairquality.org) is the regional agency responsible for protecting air quality in the nine-county Bay Area. Connect with the Air District via [Twitter](https://twitter.com/bayareaair), [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/bayareaair), and [YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/bayareaair).

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