

Smoky Skies Bulletin - August 15, 2019

The Regions of BC highlighted on the map are being impacted or are likely to be impacted by wildfire smoke over the next 24-48 hours.

The next bulletin update will be available August 16, 2019.

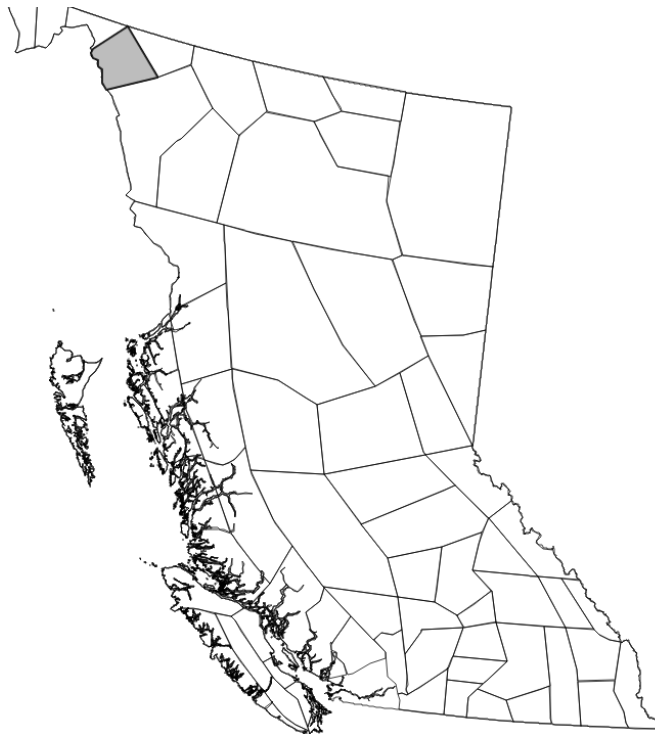
The bulletin can be accessed online at: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/environment/air-land-water/air/air-quality/air-advisories>.

Be informed

During a wildfire, smoke conditions can change quickly over short distances and can vary considerably hour-by-hour.

Wildfire smoke is a natural part of our environment but it is important to be mindful that exposure to smoke may affect your health.

People with pre-existing health conditions, the elderly, pregnant women and infants, children, and sensitive individuals are more likely to experience health effects from smoke exposure.



A description of highlighted region(s) are provided at the end of the bulletin.

During smoky conditions

Follow your common sense

- Stop or reduce your activity level if breathing becomes difficult or you feel unwell.
- Stay cool and drink plenty of fluids.
- Carry any rescue medications with you at all times.
- Make sure that children and others who cannot care for themselves follow the same advice.

Monitor your symptoms

- Different people have different responses to smoke. Mild irritation and discomfort are common, and usually disappear when the smoke clears.

- People with asthma or other chronic illness should activate the personal care plans they have designed with their family physicians.
- If you are unsure whether you need medical care, call HealthLink BC at 8-1-1.
- If you are experiencing difficulty in breathing, chest pain or discomfort, or a severe cough, contact your health care provider, walk-in clinic, or emergency department. If you are having a medical emergency, call 9-1-1.

Tips to reduce your exposure

- Smoke levels may be lower indoors but will still be elevated, so stay aware of your symptoms even when you are indoors.
- Running a commercially available HEPA (high efficiency particulate air) filter can improve indoor air quality in the room where the device is located.
- If you have a forced air heating/cooling system in your home, it may help to change the filter and set the fan to run continuously.
- Reduce indoor air pollution sources such as smoking, burning incense, and frying foods.
- Consider going to a library, community center, or shopping mall with cooler filtered air to get some relief from the smoke.
- If travelling in a car with air conditioning, keep the windows up and the ventilation set to recirculate.
- If you are very sensitive to smoke, consider moving to another location with cleaner air, but be aware that conditions can change rapidly.
- Maintaining good overall health is a good way to prevent health effects resulting from short-term exposure to air pollution.

More information

- For general information about wildfire smoke and your health, contact HealthLink BC:
 - Phone 8-1-1 (toll free, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week), or
 - Check the Wildfires and Your Health webpage at <https://www.healthlinkbc.ca/health-feature/wildfires>.
- The current Air Quality Health Index (AQHI) and other air quality information is available at the BC Air Quality website, <http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/epd/bcairquality/readings/aqhi-table.xml>.
- Forecasts of smoke levels over the next 48 hours are available from the Environment and Climate Change Canada FireWork prediction system, https://weather.gc.ca/firework/index_e.html.

- If you need to work outdoors in smoky conditions, material can be found at the WorkSafe BC Wildfire FAQ website, <https://www.worksafebc.com/en/resources/health-safety/information-sheets/wildfire-smoke-frequently-asked-questions-faq>.
- First Nations Health Authority: <http://www.fnha.ca/what-we-do/environmental-health/wildfire-information>

Contact information

Media and public inquiries regarding air quality and this bulletin:

Ralph Adams, Air Quality Meteorologist, Ministry of Environment & Climate Change Strategy, 250-371-6279.

Media questions regarding health implications of wildfires:

First Nations Health Authority
Environmental Public Health Services or Main FNHA Line: 604-693-6500
After Hours: 1-844-666-0711
Email: Ephs.afterhours@fnha.ca
Media line: 604-831-4898

Northern Health Authority
Media Line: 1-877-961-7724

Regions included under this bulletin:

Atlin