

## Smoky Skies Bulletin — May 18, 2024

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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 May 19, 2024.

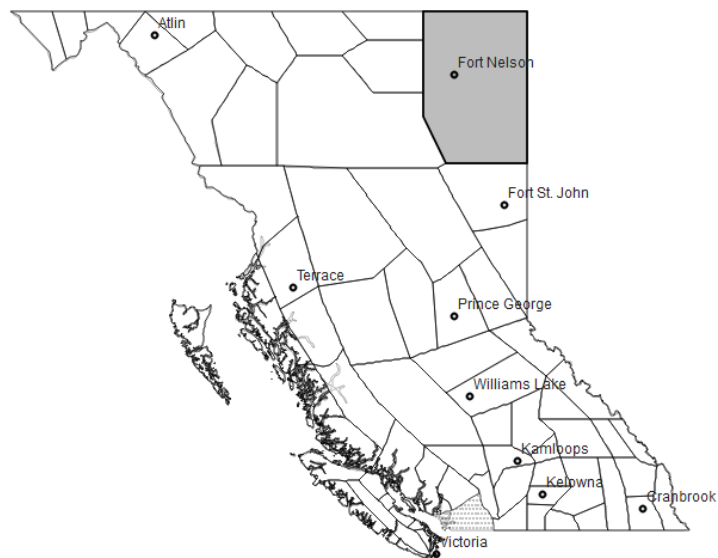
The bulletin can be accessed online at <https://www.gov.bc.ca/airqualityadvisories>

### 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, respiratory infections such as COVID-19, older adults, pregnant women and infants, children, and sensitive individuals are more likely to experience health effects from smoke exposure.



A description of current Bulletin Region(s) is provided at the end of this bulletin. Bulletin Regions do not include Metro Vancouver or the Fraser Valley Regional District.

### During smoky conditions

#### Follow your common sense

- Stop or reduce your activity level if breathing becomes uncomfortable or you feel unwell.
- Stay cool and drink plenty of fluids.
- If you have asthma or other chronic illness, carry any rescue (fast-acting) medications with you at all times and activate your personal care plan that has been designed with your family physician.
- Make sure that children and others who cannot care for themselves follow the same advice.

## Monitor your symptoms

- People respond differently to smoke. Mild irritation and discomfort are common, and usually disappear when the smoke clears.
- Exposure to wildfire smoke and the virus that causes COVID-19 can both result in respiratory symptoms such as a dry cough, sore throat, or difficulty breathing. Use the [BC COVID-19 Self-Assessment Tool](#) to help determine whether you need further assessment or testing for COVID-19.
- 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 smoke 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.
- 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 additional general information about wildfire smoke and air quality:

Advisories for Metro Vancouver and the Fraser Valley Regional District:

- Metro Vancouver's Air Quality Data and Advisories page: <https://metrovancover.org/services/air-quality-climate-change/air-quality-data-and-advisories>

## Air Quality Data

- Air Quality Health Index: <https://www.gov.bc.ca/airqualityhealthindex>
- Air Quality Map: <https://www.gov.bc.ca/airqualitymap>

## Smoke forecasts (next 48 hours)

- Environment and Climate Change Canada FireWork prediction system: [https://weather.gc.ca/firework/index\\_e.html](https://weather.gc.ca/firework/index_e.html)
- Blue Sky Canada Smoke Forecasting System: <https://firesmoke.ca/forecasts/current>

## **For additional general information about wildfire smoke and your health:**

### BC Centre for Disease Control

- Wildfire smoke and your health: <http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/prevention-public-health/wildfire-smoke>
- Wildfire smoke and COVID-19: <http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/prevention-risks/wildfires>

### Provincial Health Authorities

- First Nations Health Authority: <http://www.fnha.ca/what-we-do/environmental-health/wildfire-information>

### HealthLink BC

- Wildfires and your health: <https://www.healthlinkbc.ca/health-feature/wildfires>
- Phone 8-1-1 (toll free, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week)

### Worksafe BC

- For information about working outdoors during smoky conditions, see the wildfire FAQ website: <https://www.worksafebc.com/en/resources/health-safety/information-sheets/wildfire-smoke-frequently-asked-questions-faq>.

## Contact information

### **Media and public inquiries regarding air quality and this bulletin:**

Nick Davey, Air Quality Meteorologist, Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy,  
778-362-4477.

### **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](mailto:Ephs.afterhours@fnha.ca)  
Media line: 604-831-4898

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

## Regions included under this bulletin

**Fort Nelson** includes Fort Nelson, Muskwa, Prophet River, Buckinghorse River, Sikanni Chief, Hwy 77 north to the Yukon border,