



PSA

Date: August 13, 2020
To: All Media
From: Stephanie Krell, PIO for Unified Command
Subject: **Mosier Creek Fire and Wildfire Smoke Inhalation Prevention**

An air quality advisory is in effect for The Dalles-Hood River area due to the Mosier Creek Fire that started Wednesday, August 12. Smoke levels are fluctuating rapidly and will likely continue through at least Saturday morning, according to the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality.

Oregon Gov. Kate Brown declared the fire a conflagration, allowing state resources to be utilized. The Federal Emergency Management Agency has authorized use of federal funds to help with firefighting costs.

The fire was threatening 300 homes and critical communications infrastructure. Mandatory and voluntary evacuations have been issued for approximately 415 homes.

Currently, the fire is located two miles south of Mosier and was listed at 800 acres and 5 percent contained at mid-morning today, Thursday, August 13. Structures are threatened and evacuations are in progress at the following locations:

Level 3, GO (Evacuate): All of Paradise Ridge Place Rd, and everyone West of State Rd. from Evergreen Terrace to Dry Creek Rd.

Level 2, GET READY: Everyone East of State Rd, from Evergreen Terrace to Dry Creek Rd.

Follow the [Wasco County Sheriff's Office](#) Facebook page as the situation changes.

The Red Cross has set up temporary evacuation shelter accommodations at the Shilo Inn in The Dalles.

A health liaison and two responders certified as EMT or higher, will be at the incident to ensure COVID-19 mitigation measures are in place to ensure the safety of all personnel. North Central Public Health District personnel also attended an incident briefing today.

Anyone evacuated who has COVID-19, suspects they have it, or is a close contact of someone with COVID-19 is urged to maintain isolation or quarantine protocols while under evacuation.

Wildfire smoke is a health threat that can hurt your eyes, irritate your respiratory system and worsen chronic heart and lung diseases. Those with respiratory or heart disease, the elderly, and children, are advised to stay indoors when the air quality is poor.

Protect your health when smoke levels are high:

- Residents are urged to stay inside if possible and keep windows and doors closed.
- Avoid strenuous outdoor activity.
- Be aware of smoke in your area and avoid places with the highest levels.
- Use high efficiency particulate air (HEPA) filters. These can be portable filters or can be installed in indoor heating, ventilation, cooling and air purification systems (HVAC).
- If you have heart or lung disease or asthma, you should follow their breathing management plans; keep medications on hand, and contact healthcare providers if necessary.
- Drink lots of water. Staying hydrated can keep your airway moist to reduce respiratory irritation such as scratchy throat, runny nose and coughing.
- Avoid driving in smoky areas. If you must, roll windows up. If you need air conditioning, set system on “recirculate” to avoid bringing smoke in your vehicle.

Cloth, dust and surgical masks **do not** protect from the harmful particles of smoke. N95 masks that are tested to ensure proper fit and that are worn correctly may provide protection; otherwise, they might just provide a false sense of security. For more information, see CDC Respirator Factsheet below. For respirator use in the workplace, contact your employer or Oregon OSHA at the link below.

Smoke from wildfires is a mixture of gases and fine particles from burning trees and other plant materials. Smoke can hurt your eyes, irritate your respiratory system, and worsen chronic heart and lung diseases.

Air quality can change quickly. Please visit the Oregon Smoke Blog and the DEQ Air Quality Index links below. DEQ air quality monitoring data is updated hourly and is color-coded for easy to read information. Unfortunately, the only permanent monitor for our region is in The Dalles, with Hermiston and Prineville being the next closest monitors. A link is also

provided below with information on the 5-3-1 Visibility Index, if there's not a monitor near you.

Please see the attached Wildfire Smoke & Your Health FAQ and visit the helpful links below for additional information:

- [Oregon Smoke Blog](#) for the latest on fires and air quality across the state.
- [DEQ's Air Quality Index](#) for current air quality conditions.
- [DEQ's 5-3-1 Visibility Index](#) for estimating smoke levels via visual observation.
- [CDC](#) fact sheet about the health threats from wildfire smoke.
- [CDC](#) Respirator Factsheet.
- [OHA](#) Reducing Health Effects of Wildfire Smoke.
- [Oregon OSHA](#) Respirator use in the workplace.

(For more information, please contact North Central Public Health District at 541-506-2600 or visit us on the web at www.ncphd.org or our Facebook Page at <https://www.facebook.com/NorthCentralPublicHealth/>.)

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