



DEC NEWS

Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation

Division of Air and Water Quality

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DEC Issues Air Quality Alert for Fairbanks and Interior Alaska

August 18, 2004—Over the past 24 hours, airborne levels of fine particulates (smoke) have increased in Fairbanks and Interior Alaska due to wildfire activity. Air quality levels have risen to **hazardous for all persons** and are expected to remain hazardous for the next few days.

DEC advises everyone with respiratory illness or heart disease, the elderly and children, to avoid outside activity. All others are cautioned to avoid outdoor activities or physical exertion.

An individual's best course of action is to minimize exposure to smoke. Personal impact will depend on one's sensitivity and proximity to the fires. People with preexisting cardiovascular illnesses should follow the advice of their physician. People who believe they are being affected by the smoke should contact their doctor.

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Air is monitored only in Fairbanks. For outlying areas without monitoring, the following can serve as a guide to potential health impacts.

<u>Visibility</u>	<u>Air Quality</u>
10+ miles	Good
6 - 9 miles	Moderate
3 - 5 miles	Unhealthy for sensitive groups
1.5 - 2.5 miles	Unhealthy

0.9 - 1.4 miles	Very Unhealthy
0.8 miles or less	Hazardous