



Chelan-Douglas Health District

200 Valley Mall Parkway, East Wenatchee, WA 98802

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Chelan-Douglas Health District Board Declares Smoke Emergency for Chelan and Douglas Counties

Wenatchee, WA – August 6, 2026 – In response to hazardous wildfire smoke impacting air quality throughout Chelan and Douglas counties, the Chelan-Douglas Health District (CDHD) Board of Health has approved a resolution declaring a **Wildfire Smoke and Hazardous Air Quality Emergency** within the district's jurisdiction. A copy of the full resolution can be found on the district's [website](#).

The declaration recognizes the significant health risks associated with prolonged exposure to wildfire smoke and supports coordinated community actions to protect the health and safety of residents, visitors, workers, and those participating in outdoor activities.

Guidance for Event Organizers

Organizations planning public events should carefully evaluate whether activities can be conducted safely during periods of poor air quality.

Decisions should consider:

- Current Air Quality Index (AQI) conditions
- Expected duration of smoke exposure
- Level of physical exertion required
- Whether attendees include individuals at increased risk for smoke-related illness

Higher-risk populations include:

- Infants, children, and adolescents (especially children under age 5)
- Adults over age 65
- Pregnant individuals
- People with asthma, COPD, heart disease, or other chronic medical conditions
- People who smoke
- Outdoor workers
- Individuals with limited access to healthcare
- People experiencing homelessness or unstable housing
- Individuals with low socioeconomic status
- Members of racial and ethnic minority populations
- People with disabilities

Event organizers should consider offering indoor alternatives, providing N95 respirators when appropriate, or cancelling events earlier when higher-risk populations are expected to attend.

Recommended Actions by Air Quality Index (AQI)

AQI 101–150 (Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups)

- Sensitive populations should minimize time outdoors.
- Consider postponing or cancelling outdoor events involving children and other higher-risk groups.

AQI 151–200 (Unhealthy)

- Everyone should minimize prolonged outdoor activity.
- Children's events should be moved indoors or postponed/cancelled.

AQI 201 or Greater (Very Unhealthy/Hazardous)

- Outdoor public events should be moved indoors or postponed/cancelled.
- If indoor air quality cannot be maintained below an AQI of 201, individuals should relocate to a safer location with cleaner air.

How Residents Can Protect Their Health

During periods of wildfire smoke, CDHD recommends everyone take steps to reduce smoke exposure:

- Monitor local air quality conditions before spending time outdoors.
- Limit outdoor activities and remain indoors whenever possible.
- Keep windows and doors closed when outdoor air quality is poor.
- Use portable HEPA air cleaners or high-efficiency HVAC filtration to improve indoor air quality.
- Wear a properly fitted N95 respirator if you must be outdoors in smoky conditions.
- Seek cleaner air shelters or other public spaces with filtered air if you cannot maintain healthy indoor air at home. **North Central Regional Library (NCW Libraries) branches serve as clean air relief spaces.**
- **Stay well hydrated and reduce strenuous physical activity outdoors.**

Individuals experiencing worsening symptoms such as persistent coughing, wheezing, difficulty breathing, chest pain, or shortness of breath should seek prompt medical evaluation.

Guidance for Employers

Employers should evaluate workplace conditions and implement appropriate measures to protect employees who work outdoors or in environments affected by wildfire smoke. [Washington State Department of Labor & Industries \(L&I\)](#) has requirements and recommendations for protecting workers during wildfire smoke events, including respiratory protection and work practice controls.

Stay Informed

Residents are encouraged to monitor current air quality conditions and follow guidance from Chelan-Douglas Health District, the Washington State Department of Health, and local emergency management agencies as conditions change.

Additional wildfire smoke resources can be found here:

- [Wildfire Smoke](#)
- [Washington Guide for Public Health Actions for Wildfire Smoke](#)
- [Washington Children and Youth Activities Guide](#)
- [Canceling Outdoor Events and Activities](#)
- [Wildfire NCW](#)

For media inquiries, please contact the Chelan-Douglas Health District Communications Office at **509-886-6400** or visit www.cdhd.wa.gov.

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