



August 3, 2017

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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AIR QUALITY HEALTH ADVISORY FOR WHATCOM COUNTY

BELLINGHAM—The Whatcom County Health Department is advising residents to check current air quality conditions and take precautions before engaging in any outdoor activities. Smoke from nearby wildfires has created unhealthy air quality for much of Whatcom County.

As of Thursday morning, air quality is rated “unhealthy” at two of the four Whatcom County monitoring stations: Bellingham and the Columbia Valley/Maple Falls. An unhealthy rating indicates that many more people than average may have difficulty breathing or have worse symptoms of existing heart or lung disease. Air quality in the Custer area is rated “unhealthy for sensitive groups”, such as people with heart or lung diseases like asthma or chronic obstructive pulmonary disorder (COPD).

When air quality is unhealthy, everyone should limit their time spent outdoors and avoid exercise or other strenuous activities outdoors. Infants, children, pregnant women and adults over 65 should stay indoors. People with asthma, diabetes, respiratory infections, history of stroke, and lung or heart disease should stay also indoors.

People can also keep indoor air as clean as possible by keeping windows and doors closed and using fans or air conditioners to stay cool. For more information about how to protect yourself and your loved ones from outdoor smoke, visit <http://www.doh.wa.gov/CommunityandEnvironment/AirQuality/SmokeFromFires>.

Up-to-date air quality information can be found at <https://fortress.wa.gov/ecy/enviwa/>.

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