

# August 2018 Preparedness Checklist: Wildfire Smoke

August 2, 2018 / Heidi Pitts



Smoke and flames in a forest of trees, rocks and moss

**From our *Disaster Preparedness Program* coordinator Sheryl Gerety ([sheryl.gerety@gmail.com](mailto:sheryl.gerety@gmail.com)): a monthly, seasonally appropriate checklist page to help us tackle preparing for a disaster in manageable steps.**

The wildfire season of summer 2018 started early and has already proven more severe than normal, with many fires burning in Oregon and California. Smoke pollution is pouring into the air sheds of our region and is likely to continue through the month of August, albeit intermittently.

Smoke carries nano-particulates that navigate deep into lungs and people should take care to monitor your air quality readings before heading out for outdoor activities. You can also take measures to block smoke and clean the air indoors.

This is also an opportunity to be a good neighbor; check on elderly relatives and neighbors, and if a clean air shelter is operating in your area, consider whether your church could help distribute equipment and provide volunteers. Contact your local Emergency Management offices at the city and county levels to find out what their staffs recommend.

## Source control

- Close doors and windows
- Re-caulk around doors and windows
- Maintain door seals
- Maintain duct work for HVAC circulation
- Close blinds and draw curtains around windows
- Replace screen doors with storm doors
- Stock vinyl tarps and duct tape to seal windows from the inside in the event of a poisonous gas release in a transportation disaster

## Indoors

- Fans that recirculate indoor air provide air movement but circulate particles
- Set HVAC fans from auto to on to provide constant recirculation
- Check HVAC filters and replace as needed during prolonged periods of unhealthy air
- Consider portable air cleaners with HEPA filters designed to trap small particulates
- Clean dust particles from surfaces daily by vacuuming floors, wiping counter and table tops with a damp cleaning cloth

## Eliminate use of indoor air pollutants

- Clean with vinegar, baking soda, microfiber cleaning cloths moistened with water
- Avoid ammonia based cleaners
- Do not use insecticides or pesticides
- Do not overwater indoor plants
- Practice mold prevention

## Monitor air quality throughout the event

[Oregon Smoke Information](#) (click on the legend button to see air quality readings and density of smoke plumes)

## Out-of-doors options

- Wear an N95 mask with a carbon filter and exhalation valve if you do not have difficulty breathing: [N95 Mask Information](#)
- Limit exposure
- Run fans inside vehicles, check cabin air filters routinely

## What we are reading:

[Pre-evacuation Preparation Steps](#)  
[How Smokes From Fires Can Affect Your Health](#)

## Prayer For Rain (Book of Common Prayer, p. 828)

O God, heavenly Father, who by your Son Jesus Christ has promised to all those who seek your kingdom and its righteousness all things necessary to sustain their life: Send us, we entreat you, in this time of need, such moderate rain and showers, that we may receive the fruits of the earth, to our comfort and to your honor; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

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