

New Cal/OSHA Regulations to Protect You From **WILDFIRE SMOKE**

Effective July 29, 2019, Cal/OSHA has approved an emergency regulation that requires employers to use the Air Quality Index (AQI) for PM2.5 to determine the type of respiratory protection to provide employees when there is a risk of them being exposed to wildfire smoke while they are working.

Emergency Regulation: [California Code of Regulations, Title 8, Section 5141.1](#)

What does the new regulation require?

AQI for PM2.5	Levels of Health Concern	Respiratory Precautions for Employees Working in Affected Area(s)
0 - 50	Good	None Required
51 - 100	Moderate	
101 - 150	Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups	
151 - 200	Unhealthy	Everyone working in the area shall: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> immediately take action to reduce their exposure.
201 - 300	Very Unhealthy	Supervisors shall also: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensure there are enough NIOSH N95 (or higher) respirators available for all employees to wear voluntarily. ensure all employees have been trained according to 5141.1, Appendix B.
301 - 500*	Hazardous	

*IF THE AQI FOR PM2.5 IS GREATER THAN 500, RESPIRATORY PROTECTION IS MANDATORY FOR ALL WORKERS IN AFFECTED AREAS.

What is PM2.5?

A measurement of the number of particulate matter (PM) in the air that are 2.5 micrometers in diameter (about 1 ten-thousandth of an inch) or less.

To check the current AQI for PM2.5, do one of the following:

- www.airnow.gov and enter zip code of area of the work zone. (scan QR code)



- Contact the local air quality district.

Potential health effects of poor air quality include:

- Coughing
- Wheezing
- Difficulty breathing

Long-term exposure can cause chronic conditions and an early death!

Actions to reduce exposure include, but are not limited to:

- Moving to locations where the AQI of PM2.5 is less than 151.
- Reducing worktime in areas with unfiltered air.
- Reducing physical intensity of work to lower breathing and heart rates.
- Voluntarily wearing NIOSH-approved N95 (or higher) respiratory protective equipment. Caltrans provides P100 respiratory masks that exceed this minimum requirement (Warehouse Item Number: 4240-1722-4).

If you have any questions about this requirement, please contact your District Safety Office or the HQ Office of Health and Safety.

Information current as of July 29, 2019