

Wildfire Smoke Safety Policy**1.3.10****PURPOSE**

To provide a safe and healthy working environment for City employees and mitigate injury and illness related to unhealthy outdoor air quality related to wildfire smoke.

SCOPE OF APPLICATION

The City's Wildfire Smoke Safety Policy applies to workplaces where it is reasonably anticipated that employees may be exposed to wildfire smoke during the performance of their duties.

AUTHORITY

[8 California Code of Regulations §5141.1 Protection from Wildfire Smoke](#)

POLICY

It is the policy of the City of San José to comply with the requirements of Cal/OSHA Title 8, Section 5141.1: Protection From Wildfire Smoke. California employers are required to train employees regarding the hazards of working in areas where the current Air Quality Index (AQI) for PM2.5, which is when solid particles and liquid droplets suspended in air, known as particulate matter, with an aerodynamic diameter of 2.5 micrometers or smaller, is 151 or greater, regardless of the AQI for other pollutants.

The primary goal of this Policy is employee safety. It establishes and implements a system for communicating wildfire smoke hazards to employees, supervisors, and managers, and informing employees about wildfire smoke related illness prevention. The training and operational elements found in this Policy will provide employees, managers and supervisors the tools necessary to anticipate environmental conditions that contribute to wildfire smoke related illness, recognize when work assignments place employees at risk and what information should be communicated to employees regarding the prevention of related illness.

This Policy is consistent with the requirements of the City's Injury and Illness Prevention Program (IIPP), and nothing in this Policy supersedes or nullifies the requirements found in the City's IIPP.

This Policy does not apply to the following:

- Enclosed buildings or structures in which the air is filtered by a mechanical ventilation system and the employer ensures that windows, doors, bays, and other openings are kept closed to minimize contamination by outdoor or unfiltered air.
- Enclosed vehicles in which the air is filtered by a cabin air filter and the employer ensures that windows, doors, and other openings are kept closed to minimize contamination by outdoor or unfiltered air.
- When the City can demonstrate that the current AQI does not exceed 151 concentration of PM2.5.
- Employees exposed to a current AQI for PM2.5 of 151 or greater for a total of one hour or less during a shift.
- Firefighters engaged in wildland firefighting.

DEFINITIONS

Wildfire Smoke Safety Policy**1.3.10**

“Current Air Quality Index (Current AQI)”: The method used by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) to report air quality on a real-time basis. Current AQI is also referred to as the “NowCast,” and represents data collected over time periods of varying length in order to reflect present conditions as accurately as possible.

The current AQI is divided into six categories as shown in the table below, adapted from Table 2 of Title 40 Code of Federal Regulations, Part 58, Appendix G.

<i>Air Quality Index (AQI)</i>	
<i>Categories for PM_{2.5}</i>	<i>Levels of Health Concern</i>
0 to 50	Good
51 to 100	Moderate
101 to 150	Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups
151 to 200	Unhealthy
201 to 300	Very Unhealthy
301 to 500	Hazardous

“NIOSH” The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. NIOSH tests and approves respirators for use in the workplace.

“PM_{2.5}” Solid particles and liquid droplets suspended in air, known as particulate matter, with an aerodynamic diameter of 2.5 micrometers or smaller.

“Wildfire Smoke”. Emissions from fires in “wildlands,” as defined in Title 8, section 3402, or in adjacent developed areas.

RESPONSIBILITIES**Communication to City Departments**

The City’s Health and Safety Officer is responsible for communicating to Departments through designated Department liaisons any wildfire smoke hazards and any other necessary information.

Communications to Employees

Directors, managers and supervisors are responsible for communicating the following to employees that may be exposed to wildfire smoke during the performance of their duties:

- Supervisors are responsible for checking the AQI for PM_{2.5} before each shift and periodically thereafter during wildfire smoke hazards using any of the [U.S. EPA AirNow](#) website;
- Communicating to employees via email or verbally as appropriate regarding the current AQI for PM_{2.5};
- Providing information to employees about the protective measures available to reduce their wildfire smoke exposure; and

Wildfire Smoke Safety Policy**1.3.10**

- Providing a communication method for employees to communicate worsening air quality and adverse symptoms that may be a result of the wildfire smoke exposure.
- Document employee training using the safety training sign in sheet (attachment A) and submitting it to the City's Human Resources Safety Division

Affected employees who are performing work outside are responsible for:

- Communicating worsening air quality to their supervisor or manager; and
- Immediately report adverse symptoms to their supervisor/manager that may be a result of the wildfire smoke, such as difficulty breathing and/or chest pain,
- Seek immediate medical attention or call 911 for themselves or co-workers, if necessary.

PROCEDURES**CONTROL OF HARMFUL EXPOSURES TO EMPLOYEES**

Departments shall reduce employee exposure to air quality conditions above a current AQI of 151 PM 2.5 or higher whenever feasible. Examples include, but are not limited to, providing work inside enclosed buildings, structures, or vehicles where the air is filtered. If it is not possible to sufficiently reduce exposures, Departments shall relocate work to a location where the current AQI for PM2.5 is lower, change work schedules, reduce work intensity or provide additional rest periods.

Additionally, where the current AQI for PM2.5 is equal to or greater than 151, but does not exceed 500, the City shall make available NIOSH-approved N95 masks to all employees for voluntary use and encourage employees to use these masks. N95 masks shall be cleaned, stored, maintained, and replaced so that they do not present a health hazard to users

EMPLOYEE TRAINING

The City shall provide employees with training and instruction on the health and safety issues relating to wildfire smoke. The training shall contain the following information:

- The health effects of wildfire smoke.
- How to obtain medical treatment.
- How to obtain the current Air Quality Index (AQI) for PM2.5.
- The City's method to communicate hazards to employees and how employees can report safety hazards.
- Protection for employees from wildfire smoke.
- The importance, limitations, and benefits of using an N95 mask when exposed to wildfire smoke.
- How to properly put on, use, and maintain the respirators.

Wildfire Smoke Safety Policy

1.3.10

Appendix A: Safety Training Sign in Sheet

WildFire Smoke Safety Training

Date:

Location:

Instructor:



	Last Name	First Name	Emp I.D.#	Department	Signature
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