Wildfire Smoke Advisory Issued in North Idaho

HAYDEN, ID -- Panhandle Health District (PHD) has issued a Wildfire Smoke Advisory for Boundary, Bonner, Kootenai, Shoshone, and Benewah Counties based on the Idaho Department of Environmental Quality’s (DEQ) recent air quality monitoring. Wildfire smoke from several fires currently burning in the Western U.S. and Canada are impacting air quality.

At this time, air quality is categorized as “Unhealthy”. When air quality is unhealthy, everyone should reduce prolonged or heavy exertion outdoors. Older adults, pregnant women, children and those with pre-existing respiratory issues or heart disease are often more affected by these conditions. Residents may notice the smell of wildfire smoke and reduced visibility and are advised to:

- Avoid heavy work or exercise outdoors.
- Set air conditioning units and car vent systems to re-circulate. For homes without a central heating and/or cooling system, use portable air purifiers to remove particles.
- Limit time outdoors, especially if you have respiratory conditions or heart disease.
- Drink plenty of water. Staying hydrated helps dilute phlegm in the respiratory tract, making it easier to cough out smoke particles.
- Seek medical treatment for uncontrolled coughing, wheezing, choking, or if you have difficulty breathing once you move back indoors.
- Stay up-to-date on air quality in your community. View near real-time air quality monitoring by visiting www.airquality.deq.idaho.gov/.

Air quality is forecasted to continue to be degraded for the next several days. PHD and DEQ will continue to monitor air quality conditions and will issue additional advisories as conditions warrant.

Updated information on air quality in northern Idaho can be found online at www.airquality.deq.idaho.gov/.
To protect yourself and your family review the information on the Idaho Health and Welfare website: www.healthandwelfare.idaho.gov/Health/EnvironmentalHealth/WildfireSmoke/tabid/2172/Default.aspx, about people who are most at risk from wildfire smoke, symptoms of wildfire smoke exposure and how to limit your and your family’s contact with wildfire smoke.

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