



LEE HARRIS
MAYOR

SHELBY COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

LASONYA HARRIS HALL, MPH, PHD
INTERIM DIRECTOR

BRUCE RANDOLPH, MD, MPH
HEALTH OFFICER



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.
Shelby County Health Department

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 21, 2021

CONTACT:

Joan Carr
OFFICE: (901) 222-9010

HEALTH DEPARTMENT SPECIAL AIR QUALITY STATEMENT REGARDING SMOKE FROM WESTERN WILDFIRES

SHELBY COUNTY, TN – The Health Department’s Pollution Control Section has issued a special air quality statement to warn vulnerable residents about the potential health impacts posed by particulate matter from wildfires in the western United States and Canada.

Smoke from wildfires migrated into the region yesterday and continues to remain in the atmosphere over Shelby County today. The Health Department’s air monitors are registering increased particle pollution (PM 2.5), since yesterday morning. While the concentrations are expected to remain in the Code Yellow (moderate) range, the concentration levels may increase during today’s afternoon and evening hours. Some monitors may see Code Orange concentration levels for a brief time during the overnight hours tonight.

While the event is not expected to reach the Code Orange range, the Health Department recommends persons in highly sensitive groups that they may want to avoid prolonged exertion for the next 24 hours. Sensitive groups include persons with lung and breathing conditions like asthma and COPD, those with heart conditions, and the elderly. Excessive particulate pollution due to the smoke could cause those sensitive individuals to experience health effects including shortness of breath, dizziness, coughing, headache, and feeling unwell. If those symptoms persist, they are advised to seek medical attention.

This statement remains in effect through midnight tonight, but will be updated with the air quality forecast that will be released late this afternoon. If you have any questions, please contact Joan Carr, Public Information Officer at the Shelby County Health Department at (901) 222-9010 or at Joan.E.Carr@shelbycountyttn.gov.

-End-