



## **DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH**

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### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **STATE ADVISES RESIDENTS DOWNWIND OF WAHIAWA BRUSH FIRES TO TAKE PRECAUTIONS AGAINST SMOKE**

HONOLULU – The Hawaii State Department of Health (DOH) is advising residents living in Wahiawa and surrounding areas to take precautions and plan ahead for potential smoke exposure from the brush fires. The smoke effect on nearby communities may vary largely due to unpredictable wind and weather conditions.

Smoke exposure can cause breathing problems in individuals, especially those with pre-existing respiratory conditions such as asthma, emphysema, and bronchitis. If you live or work in an area being impacted by the brush fire smoke consider taking precautionary measures. DOH offers the following guidelines for individuals with respiratory conditions:

- Stay indoors and close your windows and doors.
- Check that your air conditioner or air purifier is working properly, change filters if necessary.
- If you take medication for a condition, make sure you have an adequate supply on hand and use it as directed by your physician.
- Contact your physician if you need more medication and get clear instructions of what to do if your lung condition suddenly worsens.
- Do not smoke and avoid second-hand smoke.
- Get plenty of rest and limit physical exertion.
- Drink plenty of fluids to loosen mucus. Warm beverages seem to work best.
- Contact your physician as soon as any respiratory problem develops.
- If possible leave the affected area.

While these suggestions are intended primarily for persons with respiratory or chronic lung disease, they are also useful for healthy persons during air pollution episodes such as heavy dust and other airborne particulates, brush fires, firework smoke, or volcanic haze.

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