



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

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Hawai'i Department of Health provides recommendations to protect against smoke from Central Maui wildfire

HONOLULU – The Hawai'i State Department of Health (DOH) is urging Maui residents and visitors to protect themselves from elevated levels of fine particulates (PM_{2.5}) caused by the wildfire in Central Maui. Elevated levels of PM_{2.5} can cause breathing problems in individuals, especially those with pre-existing respiratory conditions, such as asthma, emphysema, and bronchitis.

DOH's Kihei air monitoring station recorded extremely high levels of PM_{2.5} starting at 4 p.m. yesterday until the station went off-line, likely caused by loss of power in the area. DOH laboratory technicians worked throughout the day to bring the station back on-line as quickly as possible. The station is now back in operation and providing data to the public. A second DOH monitor located in Kahului continues to show good levels of air quality in that area.

"Particulate levels due to the smoke from brush fires may continue to be elevated in areas near and downwind of the fire and could affect communities in varying degrees, said Marianne Rossio, chief of DOH's Clean Air Branch. "We're advising residents and visitors to stay informed and heed warnings and instructions provided by state and county emergency officials."

The health department recommends that individuals with respiratory conditions who live or work in an area being impacted by smoke or vog should consider the following guidelines:

- Stay indoors and close your windows and doors.
- Check that your air conditioner or air purifier is working properly, and change filters if necessary.
- If you take medication, make sure you have an adequate supply and use them 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.
- Avoid people who have colds and other lung infections and wash your hands thoroughly.
- 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 particulate dust, brush fires, firework smoke or volcanic haze.

For further information regarding air quality, contact the Clean Air Branch at (808) 586-4200 or visit <https://health.hawaii.gov/cab/hawaii-ambient-air-quality-data/> to access air quality data.

To access additional information on respiratory health, contact the American Lung Association of Hawai'i at (808) 537-5966 or visit their website at <http://www.ala-hawaii.org>.

Follow the County of Maui on Facebook @countyofmaui for the latest information about the wildfire or visit their website at <https://www.mauicounty.gov/>.

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