



Renfrew County and District Health Unit
"Optimal Health for All in Renfrew County and District"

For Immediate Release

(Pembroke, Ontario, July 26, 2021)

Special Air Quality Statement

A special air quality statement has been issued for Renfrew County and District by Environment Canada. Smoke from active forest fires in northwestern Ontario may move over southern Ontario. Reduced visibility and deteriorating air quality are possible for the area.

Those at greater risk of health-related problems when exposed to wildfire smoke include seniors, pregnant women, infants and young children, people who work outdoors, people involved in strenuous outdoor exercise, and people with existing illness or chronic health conditions.

The best way to protect your health is to reduce your exposure to wildfire smoke.

When indoors and at home to help limit your exposure to wildfire smoke:

- Keep windows and doors closed as long as the temperature is comfortable.
- Use a clean, good quality air filter in ventilation systems.
- Visit community centres, libraries, and shopping malls. These places often have cleaner filtered air and can provide a break from smoke. Remember to practice public health measures when entering these places, such as physical distancing and masking.
- If you have an HVAC system, use recirculation settings on your HVAC system to prevent smoke from entering your home. Keep your HVAC system maintained.
- If you have an air purifier, check to see if it is certified HEPA to remove smoke from your home. Change or clean the filter according to the manufacturer's instructions.

Mild symptoms of smoke exposure include:

- Headaches
- A mild cough
- A runny nose
- Production of phlegm
- Eye, nose, and throat irritation

These symptoms are usually managed without medical intervention.

More serious symptoms include:

- Dizziness
- Chest pains
- Severe cough
- Shortness of breath
- Wheezing (including asthma attacks)

- Heart palpitations (irregular heartbeat)

If you experience any of these symptoms talk to your health care provider or seek medical attention immediately.

For additional tips on how to prevent health related illness related to air pollution visit www.airhealth.ca. To keep up-to-date on special air quality statements visit <https://bit.ly/2UNXx28>.

-30-

Renfrew County and District Health Unit

media@rcdhu.com

Fax: 613-735-3067