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PRESS RELEASE

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NOTICE AIR QUALITY IMPROVEMENT FOR VALLEY AREAS

The Butte County Air Quality Management District is issuing this Notice of Air Quality Improvement to notify the public that the high air pollution levels seen throughout this past week have today fallen below advisory levels in the valley portion of the county. Although there may continue to be visible haze in Butte County as a result of wildfires burning, the recommended activity restrictions issued earlier this week are no longer in effect for the valley areas. However, the air quality alert continues for the foothills due to continued unhealthful air quality.

Yesterday Butte County exceeded the federal health-based average 24-hour Ambient Air Quality Standard of 35 micro grams per cubic meter (ug/m³) for fine particulate matter (PM_{2.5}). The 24-hour average in Chico yesterday was **65** ug/m³ which is equal to an Air Quality Index of **150**.

Today the Air Quality Index in Chico is forecast to reach 83 At this level the air quality is rated **MODERATE** for all people.

The 24-hour average yesterday at the Paradise Airport monitor was **212** ug/m³ which is equal to an Air Quality Index of **262**.

Today the Air Quality Index in Paradise is forecast to reach 215. At this level the air quality is rated **VERY UNHEALTHY** for all people.

Unhealthful air quality conditions are expected to continue in localized areas (foothills) until the fires are extinguished. All recommendations for minimizing smoke exposure continue to be in effect in smoky areas of the county.

Recommendations for Minimizing Smoke Exposure

- ✓ Stay indoors with windows and doors closed; run air-conditioner on "recirculate" setting. Do not run swamp coolers. If it becomes too warm indoors, individuals may consider leaving the area to seek alternative shelter.
- ✓ Minimize or stop outdoor activities, especially exercise, or children's sporting events during smoky conditions.
- ✓ People in a "high risk" group or those who cannot find adequate shelter from the smoke outside may need to move to an emergency shelter located out of smoky areas.
- ✓ People who must spend time outdoors should drink plenty of fluids.
- ✓ Masks that filter out 95 percent of particles measuring 0.3 micrometers diameter or larger (known as "N95" or "R95" respirators/masks) can be effective if properly fitted to the wearer's face. These can be found at large hardware and home stores. HEPA filter masks are also recommended. Respirators are not intended to be worn for exercise use.

Information will be updated and posted to the District Web site as available at WWW.BCAQMD.ORG and recorded on the Residential Burn HOTLINE at **896-2537** or toll free at **866-240-0859**. The District office number is **891-2882 or 888-891-2882**. Following is the Air Quality Index table for Particle Pollution.

Air Quality Index (AQI): Particle Pollution

Index Values	Levels of Health Concern	Cautionary Statements
0-50	Good	None
51-100*	Moderate	Unusually sensitive people should consider reducing prolonged or heavy exertion.
101-150	Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups	People with heart or lung disease, older adults, and children should reduce prolonged or heavy exertion.
151-200	Unhealthy	People with heart or lung disease, older adults, and children should avoid prolonged or heavy exertion. Everyone else should reduce prolonged or heavy exertion.
201-300	Very Unhealthy	People with heart or lung disease, older adults, and children should avoid all physical activity outdoors. Everyone else should avoid prolonged or heavy exertion.
301-500	Hazardous	People with heart or lung disease, older adults, and children should remain indoors and keep activity levels low. Everyone else should avoid all physical activity outdoors.

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