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PRESS RELEASE

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AIR QUALITY UPDATE

The Butte County Air Quality Management District is issuing this Air Quality Update regarding the continued poor air quality from wildfire smoke. Visible haze and smoke in Butte County is expected to continue as a result of the wildfires. Outdoor activity-reduction recommendations previously issued are in effect for areas in the County that continue to experience high levels of unhealthy air. The visibility chart below may be used to estimate the air quality in your area. Keep in mind that air quality can change rapidly at different times during the day due to wind shifts; therefore, it is important to monitor the smoke throughout the day in your area and make outdoor plans accordingly.

Below is a summary of the air monitoring data collected. The federal health-based 24-hour average Ambient Air Quality Standard is **35** micrograms per cubic meter (ug/m³) for fine particulate matter (PM_{2.5}). Any value above 35 ug/m³ is considered unhealthy. The Air Quality Index (AQI) reported is based on the monitored 24-hour average level of fine particulate matter at each site. As noted above, it is important to note that during a 24 hour period the air quality can change rapidly during the day due to changes in wind patterns. Further, while the air quality impacts are generally worse in the foothill areas, the monitoring data shows there are differences based on monitoring location and predominant wind direction (see differences between Magalia and Paradise).

Chico: The 24-hour average yesterday was **189** ug/m³ which is equal to an AQI of **238** (Very Unhealthy). Today the AQI in Chico is forecast to reach **220**. At this level the air quality is rated **VERY UNHEALTHY FOR ALL PEOPLE**.

Gridley: The 24-hour average in Gridley yesterday was **161** ug/m³ which is equal to an AQI of **211** (Very Unhealthy). Today the AQI in Gridley is forecast to reach **155**. At this level the air quality is rated **UNHEALTHY FOR ALL PEOPLE**.

Oroville: There is not a PM_{2.5} monitor available in Oroville to monitor air quality. Officials recommend people use the Visibility Chart to determine smoke levels and air quality for that area. Based on the visibility yesterday the air quality in Oroville has been in the Very Unhealthy and Hazardous categories. The air quality in the Oroville area today is forecast as **VERY UNHEALTHY FOR ALL PEOPLE**.

Paradise: The monitoring data from Paradise yesterday was incomplete. Based on available data the air quality in Paradise yesterday was in the **HAZARDOUS** category. Today the AQI in Paradise is forecast to reach **400**. At this level the air quality is rated **HAZARDOUS**.

Magalia: The 24-hour average in Magalia yesterday was **204** ug/m³ which is equal to an AQI of **254** (Very Unhealthy). Today the AQI in Magalia is forecast to reach **250**. At this level the air quality is rated **VERY UNHEALTHY FOR ALL PEOPLE**.

Unhealthful air quality conditions are expected to continue in localized areas until the fires are extinguished. 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 during regular business hours is **891-2882 or 888-891-2882**.

For questions regarding health concerns relative to the smoke from the wildfires, please contact your personal health care provider or Butte County Public Health Department at **538-7581** or visit their Web site at www.buttecounty.net/publichealth. The District and Butte County Public Health Officer issued a joint a media advisory on July 9th with recommendations to reduce health impacts from wildfire smoke. The joint media advisory is posted on the District website. An Air Quality Index for Particle Pollution and Visibility Chart follow.

Air Quality Index (AQI): Particle Pollution and Visibility Chart

Index Values	Levels of Health Concern	Cautionary Statements	Visibility Range in Miles
0-50	Good	None	10+ miles
51-100*	Moderate	Unusually sensitive people should consider reducing prolonged or heavy exertion.	5 – 10 miles
101-150	Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups	People with heart or lung disease, older adults, and children should reduce prolonged or heavy exertion.	3 – 5 miles
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.	1.5 – 2.5 miles
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.	1 – 1.25 miles
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.	< 0.75 miles

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