

---

2525 Dominic Drive, Suite J  
Chico, CA 95928  
(530) 891-2882  
(530) 891-2878 Fax



W. James Wagoner  
*Air Pollution Control Officer*

Robert McLaughlin  
*Asst. Air Pollution Control Officer*

## PRESS RELEASE

July 13, 2008

### 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 continues as a result of the North State wildfires but is expected to diminish across the valley as better ventilation draws some of the generated smoke out of the air shed. 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/m<sup>3</sup>) for fine particulate matter (PM<sub>2.5</sub>). Any value above 35 ug/m<sup>3</sup> 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. Since the AQI is an average, air quality will reach levels above and below the average. 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.

**Chico:** The 24-hour average yesterday was **40** ug/m<sup>3</sup> which is equal to an AQI of **99** (Moderate). Today the AQI in Chico is forecast to reach **105**. At this level the air quality is rated **UNHEALTHY FOR SENSITIVE PEOPLE**.

**Gridley:** The 24-hour average in Gridley yesterday was **22** ug/m<sup>3</sup> which is equal to an AQI of **64** (Moderate). Today the AQI in Gridley is forecast to reach **60**. At this level the air quality is rated **MODERATE**.

**Oroville:** There is not a PM<sub>2.5</sub> 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 was Unhealthy. The air quality in the Oroville area today is forecast as **MODERATE**.

**Paradise:** The 24-hour average in Paradise yesterday was **66** ug/m<sup>3</sup> which is equal to an AQI of **151** (Unhealthy). Today the AQI in Paradise is forecast to reach **155**. At this level the air quality is rated **UNHEALTHY FOR ALL PEOPLE**.

**Magalia:** The 24-hour average in Magalia yesterday was **117** ug/m<sup>3</sup> which is equal to an AQI of **181** (Unhealthy). Today the AQI in Magalia is forecast to reach **155**. At this level the air quality is rated **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](http://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](http://www.buttecounty.net/publichealth). The District and Butte County Public Health Officer issued a joint a media advisory on July 9<sup>th</sup> 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

###