# Wildfire Smoke Preparedness

Wildfire smoke can travel hundreds of miles – meaning smoke from wildfire near and far can impact your health.

## Wildfire Smoke

Temperature, wind, and topography impact how and where travels and settles

Large smoke particles irritate the eyes, nose, and throat

Small smoke particles irritate the lungs, and can impact the heart and other organs

## Assess Your Risk

Those at higher risk due to smoke exposure include:

* Children
* Older adults
* People with heart or lung disease
* People who work outdoors

You can find air quality information at [www.airnow.gov](http://www.airnow.gov), or sign-up for air quality notifications from the US Environmental Protection Agency at <https://www.enviroflash.info/>

## Action Steps

### Before a fire:

* Create a clearn air room – one where you can close all windows and doors, and create clean air by using an air cleaner or do-it-yourself air filter
* Replace old filters in air conditioners, heaters, or central HVAC systems with MERV 13 filters
* Familiarize yourself with your HVAC system to understand how to shut off outside air intake
* Plan ahead for how you’ll reduce smoke risk for yourself, and your pets/animals when smoke is in the air

### When smoke is in the air:

* Check the air quality ([www.airnow.gov](http://www.airnow.gov)) and follow guidance
* Stay indoors and use an air cleaner or air filters
* Wear a tight fitting respirator mask that will protect against ash – look for the words “NIOSH” and “N95” printed on the mask

## Smoke Preparedness Supply List

* Air cleaner or do-it-yourself air filter
* Well-fitted, clean air filters installed on your air conditioning and heating systems
* N95 mask

## Post-Fire Action Steps

### After a fire:

* Clean up ash and smoke damage before children, pets or other sensitive groups return home
* Be safe while cleaning – wear gloves, a mask, long sleeved shirt, pants, shoes and socks, and change out of these clothes into clean clothes before leaving the cleanup site
* Wipe down and clean:
  + Walls
  + Floors
  + Surfaces
  + Cupboards
  + Dishes
  + Furniture
  + Windown treatments
  + Bedding
  + Clothing
  + Replace filters in your HVAC system or air cleaners
  + Consider having air ducts cleaned

## Do-it-yourself box fan air filter

### Supply list:

* 20 inch box fan
* 20 inch MERV 13 air filter
* Duct tape

### To put your filter together:

1. Place the fan on a flat surface so that the front (the side that blows air out) faces away from you, and the back (where air gets pulled into the fan) is towards you.
2. Look for the arrow on the MERV 13 filter that shows which way the air should flow – when attached to the back of the fan, the arrow on the filter should point toward the fan.
3. Line the filter up with the side of the fan that is closest to you (where the air gets pulled into the fan) and use the duct tape to attach the MERV 13 filter to the fan.
4. Plug it in and use – the air coming out will be filtered!

### For more preparedness information visit [www.boulderodm.gov/preparedness](http://www.boulderodm.gov/preparedness)