



News Release

Washington Department of Ecology news
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Air quality still ‘hazardous’ in Wenatchee area, but some communities see improvement

OLYMPIA – The Wenatchee, Pateros and Cashmere areas have seen slight clearing in wildfire smoke, but air quality there still remains in the “hazardous” category, according to the Washington Department of Ecology (Ecology).

Other areas of Eastern Washington – such as Entiat, Quincy, Leavenworth, Chelan, Yakima, White Swan, and Toppenish – experienced some clearing, but still not enough to return to healthy air. Pullman and Clarkston also saw some much needed clearing Saturday evening, after an initial rise in pollution levels earlier in the day as the inversion broke and mixed some overhanging Idaho wildfire smoke to the surface. The threat of Idaho wildfire smoke has passed thanks to a wind shift. Ellensburg and Cle Elum experienced “good” air on Saturday, and should again today.

Omak and Twisp saw some increase in pollution levels as a weather system pushed a little smoke up those valleys. But conditions in those communities should improve somewhat today.

There are no reports of new fire starts from lightning strikes this morning, but a small chance of lightning remains until late today. Isolated light rainfall is forecast for several parts of the eastern Columbia Basin today as a low pressure system passes through the far eastern parts of the state, but not near the wildfires. While areas nearest to the wildfires will continue to see poor air quality, an increase in winds will help with smoke dispersion. Eastern Washington will continue to see some gradual improvement in air quality, though periodic impacts from drifting smoke are expected.

Some cooler temperatures along with a little bit of rain (mostly in the northern counties of Eastern Washington) are expected this week. This will further improve air quality.

All residents in the Wenatchee area should stay indoors and curtail their physical activities both indoors and outside. Doors and windows should remain closed. In the remainder of the Yakima and Columbia Basin common sense precautions should be taken by everyone, but sensitive groups, such as children, the elderly and heart patients, are particularly vulnerable.

The biggest health threat comes from the fine particles in smoke. These can cause burning eyes, runny nose, bronchitis and other illnesses. Smoky air also can aggravate heart and lung diseases, and even lead to death.

Sunday smoke update and weather forecast - 2 of 3

You can [find news and information about smoke and wildfires](#) from a variety of state, local and federal agencies on a new blog.

Central Washington University is providing [information for students and their families](#) online.

The Washington State Department of Health is providing answers to [frequently asked questions about wildfire smoke](#).

The National Weather Service has issued [an Air Quality Alert](#) for much of eastern Washington.

Gov. Gregoire has issued [a burn ban in Eastern Washington](#), which is in effect until midnight Monday.

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Joint blog on wildfire smoke and related information: <http://wasmoke.blogspot.com>

Check for air quality monitoring information:
www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/air/air_monitoring_data/WAQA_Intro_Page.html

Washington Department of Health smoke information:
<http://www.doh.wa.gov/Newsroom.aspx>

Frequently asked questions about wildfire smoke:
<http://www.doh.wa.gov/CommunityandEnvironment/AirQuality/OutdoorAir/SmokeFromFires/FrequentlyaskedQuestionsaboutWildfireSmoke.aspx>

Central Washington University information: <http://www.cwu.edu/table-mountain-fire>

Read the Governor's emergency declaration: <http://www.governor.wa.gov/news/news-view.asp?pressRelease=1967&newsType=1>

National Weather Service Air Quality Alert:
<http://forecast.weather.gov/wwamap/wwatxtget.php?cwa=otx&wwa=air%20quality%20alert>

Ecology's website: <http://www.ecy.wa.gov>
Ecology's social media: <http://www.ecy.wa.gov/about/newmedia.html>

Broadcast version

Sunday smoke update and weather forecast - 3 of 3

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