

# Sacramento County Department of Health Services

## Public Health Division

### **N95 Respirator:**

The Sacramento County Public Health Officer does not recommend use of N95 respirator masks for the Sacramento County area due to smoke coming from the Butte County Camp Fire.

### **Key Message:**

The use of the N95 Respirator Mask is only recommended for those near the fire who do not have the option to be indoors or have access to filtered/recirculated air. N95 respirator use by those with heart and respiratory diseases can be dangerous, and should only be done under a doctor's supervision.

### **Caution/warning statements for N95 Respirator Mask distribution to the public:**

- N95 respirator can make it more difficult for the wearer to breathe due to carbon dioxide build up, which reduces the intake of oxygen, increased breathing rates and heart rates.
- People with chronic respiratory, cardiac, or other medical conditions that make breathing difficult should check with their healthcare provider before using an N95 respirator
- To work as expected, an N95 respirator requires a proper fit to your face
- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) does not generally recommend facemasks and respirators for use in home or community settings.

### **Risks of N95 respirator use outside of fire zones outweigh benefits:**

- Most people will not contact their healthcare provider before using the N95 respirator
- N95 use may lead to increased heart rate, respiratory rate, work of breathing, CO2 buildup in micro-ambient air, and heat stress -- potentially posing risk to sensitive populations
- May encourage outdoor activity which could worsen exposure

### **For Sacramento County Residents, the Public Health Officer does not recommend N95 respirator use, and instead recommends the following:**

- Minimize all outdoor activities if you see or smell smoke, even if you're healthy
- Children, the elderly and people with respiratory or heart conditions should be particularly careful to avoid exposure
- Stay indoors with doors and windows closed as much as possible
- Asthmatics should follow their asthma management plan
- Contact your doctor if you have symptoms of cough, shortness of breath, or other symptoms you believe to be caused by smoke
- Those with heart disease should especially limit their smoke exposure since the particulate matter can cause heart attacks