

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