

Smoky Skies Bulletin — September 11, 2022

The Regions of BC highlighted on the map are being impacted or are likely to be impacted by wildfire smoke over the next 24 hours.

Many regions in B.C. are being impacted by smoke from local wildfire activity in addition to smoke from several fires in the U.S. Locally, smoke conditions may worsen if fire activity increases later today. Widespread smoke is expected in most regions. There are ongoing smoke impacts in areas near Hudson's Hope and Fort St. John due to the Battleship Mountain wildfire, and conditions may worsen in the southern Williston Lake area later today. Areas in central and southern B.C. may experience variable smoke conditions today. Areas at higher elevation may also have higher smoke impacts. Areas of southeastern Vancouver Island may experience variable smoke conditions today, with clearing expected later today or this evening.

The next bulletin update will be available September 12, 2022.

The bulletin can be accessed online at:

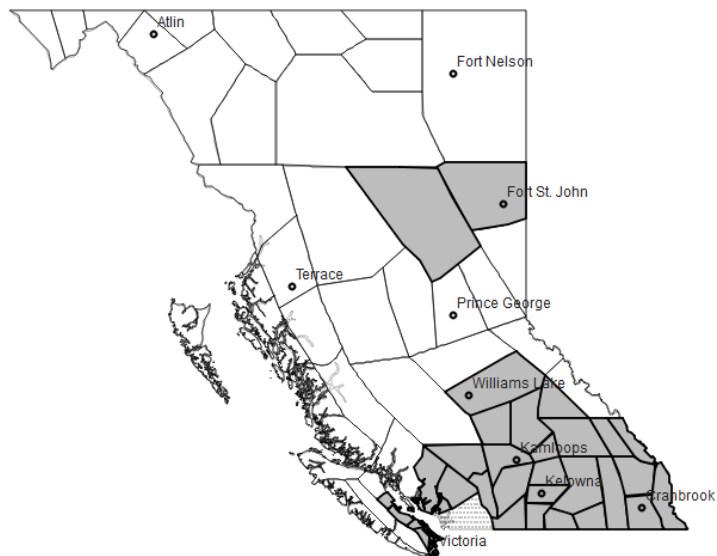
<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/environment/air-land-water/air/air-quality/air-advisories>.

Be informed

During a wildfire, smoke conditions can change quickly over short distances and can vary considerably hour-by-hour.

Wildfire smoke is a natural part of our environment but it is important to be mindful that exposure to smoke may affect your health.

People with pre-existing health conditions, respiratory infections such as COVID-19, older adults, pregnant women and infants, children, and sensitive individuals are more likely to experience health effects from smoke exposure.



A description of current Bulletin Region(s) is provided at the end of this bulletin. Bulletin Regions do not include Metro Vancouver or the Fraser Valley Regional District.

During smoky conditions

Follow your common sense

- Stop or reduce your activity level if breathing becomes uncomfortable or you feel unwell.
- Stay cool and drink plenty of fluids.
- If you have asthma or other chronic illness, carry any rescue (fast-acting) medications with you at all times and activate your personal care plan that has been designed with your family physician.
- Make sure that children and others who cannot care for themselves follow the same advice.

Monitor your symptoms

- People respond differently to smoke. Mild irritation and discomfort are common, and usually disappear when the smoke clears.
- Exposure to wildfire smoke and the virus that causes COVID-19 can both result in respiratory symptoms such as a dry cough, sore throat, or difficulty breathing. Use the [BC COVID-19 Self-Assessment Tool](#) to help determine whether you need further assessment or testing for COVID-19.
- If you are unsure whether you need medical care, call HealthLink BC at 8-1-1.
- If you are experiencing difficulty in breathing, chest pain or discomfort, or a severe cough, contact your health care provider, walk-in clinic, or emergency department. If you are having a medical emergency, call 9-1-1.

Tips to reduce your smoke exposure

- Smoke levels may be lower indoors but will still be elevated, so stay aware of your symptoms even when you are indoors.
- Running a commercially available HEPA (high efficiency particulate air) filter can improve indoor air quality in the room where the device is located.
- If you have a forced air heating/cooling system in your home, it may help to change the filter and set the fan to run continuously.
- Reduce indoor air pollution sources such as smoking, burning incense, and frying foods.
- If travelling in a car with air conditioning, keep the windows up and the ventilation set to recirculate.
- If you are very sensitive to smoke, consider moving to another location with cleaner air, but be aware that conditions can change rapidly.
- Maintaining good overall health is a good way to prevent health effects resulting from short-term exposure to air pollution.

More information

For additional general information about wildfire smoke and air quality:

Advisories for Metro Vancouver and the Fraser Valley Regional District:

- Metro Vancouver's Current Air Quality Status page: <http://www.metrovancouver.org/services/air-quality/current-air-quality/airmap/Pages/default.aspx>

Air Quality Data

- Air Quality Health Index: <http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/epd/bcairquality/data/aqhi-table.html>
- Air Quality Map: <http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/epd/bcairquality/readings/find-stations-map.html>

Smoke forecasts (next 48 hours)

- Environment and Climate Change Canada FireWork prediction system: https://weather.gc.ca/firework/index_e.html
- Blue Sky Canada Smoke Forecasting System: <https://firesmoke.ca/forecasts/current/>

For additional general information about wildfire smoke and your health:

BC Centre for Disease Control

- Wildfire smoke and your health: <http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/prevention-public-health/wildfire-smoke>
- Wildfire smoke and COVID-19: <http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/prevention-risks/wildfires>

Provincial Health Authorities

- First Nations Health Authority: <http://www.fnha.ca/what-we-do/environmental-health/wildfire-information>
- Interior Health Authority: For resources related to forest fire smoke exposure, air quality, food safety when the power is out and ensuring your drinking water is safe visit <http://www.interiorhealth.ca> (Environment Tab/Emergency Information).

HealthLink BC

- Wildfires and your health: <https://www.healthlinkbc.ca/health-feature/wildfires>
- Phone 8-1-1 (toll free, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week)

Worksafe BC

- For information about working outdoors during smoky conditions, see the wildfire FAQ website: <https://www.worksafebc.com/en/resources/health-safety/information-sheets/wildfire-smoke-frequently-asked-questions-faq>.

Contact information

Media and public inquiries regarding air quality and this bulletin:

Annie Seagram, Air Quality Meteorologist, Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy, 778-875-3079.

Media questions regarding health implications of wildfires:

First Nations Health Authority
Environmental Public Health Services or Main FNHA Line: 604-693-6500
After Hours: 1-844-666-0711
Email: Ephs.afterhours@fnha.ca
Media line: 604-831-4898

Fraser Health Authority
Media Line: 604-613-0794
Email: media@fraserhealth.ca

Interior Health Authority
Media line: 1-844-469-7077
Email: media@interiorhealth.ca

Northern Health Authority
Media Line: 1-877-961-7724

Vancouver Coastal Health Authority
Rachel Galligan, Communications Leader: 236-833-5618
Deana Lancaster, Communications Leader: 604-230-6130
After-hours media line: 604-202-2012

Vancouver Island Health Authority
Dominic Abassi: 250-755-7966 (Dominic.abassi@viha.ca)

Andrew Leyne: 250-370-8908 (Andrew.leyne@viha.ca)

After-hours media line: 250-716-7750

Regions included under this bulletin

100 Mile includes Hwy 97 from 108 Mile House to Clinton, Bridge Lake and Canim Lake.

Arrow Lakes - Slocan Lake includes Slocan, New Denver, Nakusp, and Fauquier

B.C. North Peace River includes the City of Fort St John and all communities along Hwy 97 extending from Farmington to Pink Mountain; Hwy 29 including Moberly Lake, Hudson's Hope; also includes Rolla, Clayhurst and Goodlow

Boundary includes Grand Forks, Midway and Greenwood

Cariboo (South) includes Williams Lake, Northern and Central sections of Wells Gray Park

Central Okanagan includes Kelowna, Lake Country, West Kelowna and Peachland

Comox Valley includes Black Creek and Cumberland

East Columbia includes Golden

East Kootenay (North) includes Edgewater, Invermere, Canal Flats and Skookumchuck

East Kootenay (South) includes Kimberley, Cranbrook, Yahk, Moyie, Wasa Lake Provincial Park, Jaffray, Grasmere and Roosville

Duncan extends from Ladysmith to Shawnigan Lake

East Vancouver Island (central) includes Nanoose Bay, Parksville, Coombs, Qualicum Beach, Fanny Bay, Denman Island, Hornby Island, and Lasqueti Island

Elk Valley includes Elko, Fernie, Sparwood and Elkford

Fraser Canyon (North) Includes Lillooet and Andersen lake.

Fraser Canyon (South) Trans Canada Hwy 1 from Lytton to Choate.

Greater Victoria includes Sidney, Victoria, Saanich, Langford, Metchosin

Howe Sound includes Horseshoe Bay, Lions Bay, Squamish, Bowen Island. There is some overlap between areas of Metro Vancouver (e.g. Horseshoe Bay, Lions Bay, Bowen Island) considered part of the Lower Fraser Valley Airshed and the Howe Sound zone used by BC ENV for issuing smoky skies bulletins. A smoky skies bulletin could be issued for the Howe Sound zone before the thresholds are reached to trigger an air quality advisory issued by Metro Vancouver for these overlapping parts of the Lower Fraser Valley Airshed. This should not be interpreted as conflicting information; it reflects the different approaches to notifications about wildfire smoke within the two agencies.

Kootenay Lake includes Creston and Kaslo

Nanaimo includes Cedar, South Wellington, and Cassidy

Nicola Includes Merritt, Strump Lake, Pennask Lake, and Brookmere.

North Columbia includes Blue River and McMurphy

North Okanagan includes Vernon, Armstrong, Enderby, Lavington and Lumby

North Thompson Includes Barriere, Clearwater and Vavenby.

Shuswap Includes Salmon Arm, Sicamous, and Chase.

Similkameen includes Princeton

South Okanagan includes Penticton, Summerland, Naramata, Keremeos, Oliver and Osoyoos

South Thompson Includes Kamloops, Rayleigh, Monte Creek, Cache Creek, Spences Bridge and Logan Lake.

Southern Gulf Islands includes Southern Gulf Islands

Sunshine Coast (south) includes Sechelt, Gibsons, Earls Cove, and Nelson Island

West Columbia includes Revelstoke

West Kootenay includes Nelson, Castlegar, Trail, Rossland

Whistler includes Whistler and Pemberton

Williston includes McLeod Lake, Mackenzie and Williston Lake

Yoho - Kootenay Park includes Yoho and Kootenay National Parks