

May 8, 2020

HEALTH ADVISORY

Escambia County, Florida Residents May be at Increased Risk for Health Problems Associated with Smoke from Brush Fire

Contact:

Media Desk: PIO.CHD17@flhealth.gov



Pensacola, Fla. – The Florida Department of Health in Escambia County (FDOH-Escambia) is advising residents of an increased risk for health problems associated with smoke from a brush fire near Hurst Hammock Road in Escambia County.

Smoke is a respiratory irritant that can cause scratchy throat or irritated eyes and nose. According to the CDC, breathing in smoke can have immediate health effects, including coughing, difficulty breathing, scratchy throat, irritated eyes and nose, shortness of breath, and rapid heartbeat. Smoke can also worsen conditions such as asthma and other chronic respiratory or lung conditions. Dust generated from fire response activity may also worsen these conditions.

Protect yourself and your family from smoke:

- Pay attention to local air quality reports, news coverage, or health warnings related to smoke.
- Use common sense when outside conditions are smoky. Avoid outdoor activities, particularly for children and persons with severe or chronic respiratory conditions such as asthma or chronic lung disease.
- While inside, residents should close windows and run their heating or cooling system, if possible. Keep the fresh air intake closed and change or clean the system's filter as needed to prevent bringing additional smoke inside.
- Help keep particle levels lower inside. When smoke levels are high, try to avoid using anything that burns, such as wood fireplaces, gas logs, gas stoves and even candles. Do not vacuum, which stirs up particles already inside your home. Also, do not smoke tobacco.
- Follow your doctor's advice about taking medicines and following your asthma management plan if you have asthma or other lung disease. Call your doctor if your symptoms worsen.

Persons experiencing respiratory symptoms, including those with severe or chronic respiratory conditions like asthma or chronic lung disease, should consult their doctor for treatment and stay inside their homes. For questions related to health problems or symptoms you may be experiencing related to the smoke, please contact your doctor. For medical emergencies, call 9-1-1 or go to the nearest emergency room.

For the latest information on response efforts related to the Hurst Hammock Fire in Escambia County, residents are encouraged to follow [Escambia County Emergency Management](#) on Facebook and [@BeReadyEscambia](#) on Twitter. Sign up [here](#) for emergency alerts.

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