

Protection from Wildfire Smoke Program (Template)

How to use the template

Replace the text **marked in red** with your company's information.

Additional resource links are provided throughout the document. Review and print any resources that you need.

Protection from Wildfire Smoke Program for Blazona Concrete Construction

Purpose

Blazona Concrete Construction will follow the procedures in this program to protect our outdoor workers from wildfire smoke and comply with the Cal/OSHA Protection from Wildfire Smoke regulation [8CCR5141.1](#).

Scope

This policy will apply when it can be expected that our employees may be exposed to wildfire smoke and the current Air Quality Index (AQI) for PM2.5 is 151 or greater. This policy does not apply to the following workplaces or operations:

- Enclosed buildings where windows, doors, and other openings are kept closed and the air is filtered by mechanical ventilation
- Enclosed vehicles where windows, doors, and other openings are kept closed and the air is filtered by a cabin air filter
- Where worksite measurements of PM2.5 show that the current AQI does not equal or exceed 151
- Employees exposed to a current AQI of 151 or greater for less than one hour during their shift
- Firefighters engaged in wildland firefighting

Responsibilities

Overall Program Management

This program will be managed by Adrian J. Vela Safety Manager. Management of this program will include the following:

- Maintain and update this written program.
- Provide training to employees who are covered by this program.
- Maintain an adequate supply of N95 respirators.
- Ensure this program is being followed and enforced.

Supervisor Responsibilities

- Attend all trainings.
- Determine the Air Quality Index (AQI) when your employees may be exposed to wildfire smoke.
- Check AQI for PM2.5 level before each shift and periodically during the day when the AQI exceeds 151.
- Inform employees periodically of the current AQI for PM2.5 and protective measures available.
- Implement control measures for outdoor workers exposed to wildfire smoke.
- Ensure availability of N95 respirators and enforce required respirator use when the AQI for PM2.5 is greater than 500.
- Take action when an employee reports symptoms of poor air quality, such as providing clean air brakes or removing employees from poor AQI environments.

Employee Responsibilities

Employees working outdoors exposed to wildfire smoke have the following responsibilities:

- Understand and follow the requirements of this program.
- Attend all trainings.
- Talk to your doctor if you have health issues that affect your ability to wear a respirator. If health issues exist, tell your employer about them.
- Wear a respirator when AQI PM2.5 is greater than 500.
- Request a N95 for voluntary use when AQI PM2.5 is 151 or greater
- Inform their supervisor if air quality is getting worse.
- Inform their supervisor if suffering from symptoms of poor air quality such as asthma attacks, chest pain, nausea, or trouble breathing.

Determining Exposure

Air quality is described using the US EPA's Air Quality Index (AQI) – the higher the number, the more polluted and hazardous the air. The current AQI is divided into the six categories shown in Table 1 below. Small particulates, known as PM2.5, pose the greatest health hazard because they can be inhaled deep into the lungs. Therefore, PM2.5 is the pollutant to monitor when working outdoors during wildfire activity.

<i>Air Quality Index (AQI) - Categories for PM2.5</i>	
<i>Index Value</i>	<i>Description of Air Quality</i>
0 to 50	Good
51 to 100	Moderate
101 to 150	Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups
151 to 200	Unhealthy
201 to 300	Very Unhealthy
301 to 500	Hazardous

Table 1 – AQI Categories, Title 40 of Federal Regulations, Part 58, Appendix G

Supervisor(s) [Name(s)/job title(s)] will determine the potential employee exposure to PM2.5 before each shift and periodically thereafter to protect employee health by any of the following methods (choose at least one):

- Check AQI forecasts and current AQI for PM2.5 by consulting the following online resources: [US EPA AirNow](#) website, [US Forest Service Wildland Air Quality Response Program](#) website, [California Air Resources Board](#) website, local air pollution control district website, or local air quality management district website.
- Obtain AQI forecasts and current AQI for PM2.5 directly from the EPA, California Air Resources Board, local air pollution control district, or local air quality management district by phone, email, text, or other effective method.
- Measure PM2.5 at the worksite and convert to AQI according to [Appendix A](#) of 8CCR5141.1.

Communication of Hazard

Supervisor(s) [Name(s)/job title(s)] will communicate wildfire smoke hazards in such a way to be understood by all employees. Information provided to employees will include the current AQI for PM2.5 and protective measures available to reduce wildfire smoke exposure.

Employees will be encouraged to inform [name/job title] of worsening air quality and any adverse symptoms they may be experiencing due to wildfire smoke exposure such as asthma attacks, chest pain, nausea, or difficulty breathing.

Exposure Control

[Company Name] will use the following controls to reduce employee exposure to PM2.5:

- Engineering controls will be used first to reduce employee exposure.
 - Enclosed buildings, structures, or vehicles where the air is mechanically filtered—air that is forced by a fan through a filtering material that traps particles and removes them from the air—will be provided when feasible.
 - The goal is to reduce exposure to an AQI of less than 151 or as much as possible.
- Administrative controls will be implemented if engineering controls are unable to reduce PM2.5 exposure to less than a current AQI of 151, such as:
 - Relocating work activities to a location where the current AQI for PM2.5 is lower, such as buildings or vehicles with filtered air
 - Changing work schedules
 - Lowering work intensity to reduce breathing and heart rate
 - Providing rest areas with filtered air
 - Allowing extended or additional rest periods.

Note: Engineering and administrative controls do not apply to emergency situations when operations (such as medical, communications, utilities) are directly aiding firefighting or emergency response. In these situations, N95s will be provided for voluntary use when AQI for PM2.5 is equal or greater than 151 per section 5141.1(f)(4).

- Respiratory protection will be provided as follows:

- Voluntary use for AQI of 151-500. NIOSH approved N95 respirators (filtering face pieces) will be provided by [Company Name] and affected employees will be encouraged to use them whenever the current AQI for PM2.5 is equal or greater than 151. N95 filtering face piece respirators will be stored, maintained, and replaced so they do not create a health hazard to the wearer.
- Required use for AQI greater than 500. Respirator use is required when the current AQI for PM2.5 is greater than 500. Required respirator use must follow the requirements of [8CCR5144](#), which includes training, medical evaluation, and fit testing of respirator users. The protection provided by the respirator during these conditions must reduce the AQI PM2.5 to below 151 inside the respirator.

Note - When the AQI is above 500, respirators with a higher [assigned protection factor \(APF\)](#) than an N95 respirator, such as a full-face respirator or a powered-air-purifying respirator (PAPR), may be necessary.

Training

Training will be provided by [Name/job title] to all employees and supervisors with potential exposure to wildfire smoke. This training will include the following topics found in [Appendix B](#) of the regulation, which can be printed out or sent via internet link for employees:

- The [health effects](#) of wildfire smoke
- The right to obtain medical treatment without fear of reprisal
- How to obtain the current AQI for PM2.5
- The requirements of [8CCR5141.1](#)
- How [Company Name] will communicate harmful AQI and protective measures available
- How employees should inform [Company Name] of worsening air quality or if they are experiencing any symptoms due to the air quality.
- The methods that will be used to protect employees from wildfire smoke
- The N95 filtering face piece respirator is the minimum level of protection for wildfire smoke.
- Employees with a heart or lung problem should consult with a physician prior to wearing an N95 respirator
- The importance, limitations, and benefits of [using a respirator when exposed to wildfire smoke](#)
- How to [properly put on, use, and maintain the respirators](#) provided by [Company Name]
- Dispose and replace the respirator when it becomes damaged, deformed or increases breathing resistance

Additional information on the use of N95 respirators for protection from wildfire smoke can be found on the Cal/OSHA page [N95 Mask Commonly Asked Questions](#).