



DEC NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DEC Issues Statewide Air Quality Advisory

August 16, 2004-Fairbanks— Airborne particulate levels are exceeding federal air quality standards in Interior, Central, Southcentral and Southeast Alaska today due to wildfire smoke as dry conditions continue over the region. Air quality levels, are now considered **Unhealthy to Hazardous**.

Several fires in the interior have intensified and smoke is being spread by a high pressure system over large areas of the State. Smoke is impacting the air quality as far west as Galena, and from Fairbanks, Tok and other Interior Alaska communities into the Southeast and Southcentral Coastal Regions. Particulate concentrations from smoke may vary during the next 5 to 7 days depending on wind direction and fire activity. Air quality levels will remain **Unhealthy to Hazardous** as long as the current weather pattern exists.

When smoke is present, children, the elderly, and those with existing respiratory or heart ailments are advised to reduce physical activity and remain indoors. Others are advised to minimize prolonged exposure to the smoke.

Air quality levels are monitored in Fairbanks. Particulate levels may be significantly higher in other areas of the region depending on wind speed and direction.

For daily information on air quality in the Fairbanks North Star Borough, please call the Borough's 24-hour Air Quality Recorder at (907) 459-1234.

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