



Printable Community Resources/Posters










Updated: August 14, 2020

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10 Steps to FireSmart Your Home

DO THIS: 	NOT THAT: 
<p>Move firewood 10-30 meters from your home</p> 	<p>Give wildfire an easy stepping stone to get to your door.</p> 
<p>Clean your roof and gutters of leaves & pine needles</p> 	<p>Let fuel for wildfire pile up on the exterior of your home</p> 
<p>Have a wildfire evacuation plan with your household</p> 	<p>Wing it. Coming up with a plan is quick and easy.</p> 

Keep grass cut to less than 10 cm



Keep an unruly lawn. Fires travel quickly across long grass.



Trim and prune any trees or vegetation that overhang your roof



Allow vegetation to act as direct path for fire and embers on to your home.



Take inventory of what kind of trees grow on your property.

Some trees are more flammable, such as Pine. Other trees are more resistant to fires, such as birch and aspen.



Be ignorant to the flammability potential of different types of vegetation around your home.



Make sure everyone in your family knows where the gas, electric, and water mains shut-off are!



Wait till the fire is at your door to figure it out.



Assess your roof and chimney.

Is your roof clean? Do you have a spark arrestor? Having a clean, protected roof can significantly improve the chances of the entire structure surviving.



Forget about the exterior of your home!



Relocate propane tanks 10-30 meters from your home



Keep any types of explosives within a close proximity to your home.



Conduct a full FireSmart assessment of your home and property.

Download the [FireSmart Homeowner's Manual](#) to assess and FireSmart your home.



Leave it to chance. Know how well your home is prepared for the threat of wildfire.



How to Build a Household Emergency Kit and Grab-and-Go Bag

Following a disaster, you may need to stay at home with your emergency kit or leave immediately with your grab-and-go bags. Gather and organize your emergency supplies now so you're ready when disaster strikes.

Building your emergency kit or grab-and-go bag doesn't need to be expensive or take a lot of time. Follow our basic supply lists below. Just remember to consider the unique needs of your household, such as including items for pets or seniors.

Emergency Kit Supplies

Put your supplies in one or two containers, such as plastic bins or duffel bags. Store them in an area of your home that's easy to get to, such as a hall closet, spare room or garage.

- Non-perishable food: three-day to one-week supply, with a manual can opener
- [Water](#): four litres per person, per day for drinking and sanitation
- Phone charger, battery bank or inverter
- Battery-powered or hand-crank radio
- Battery-powered or hand-crank flashlight
- Extra batteries
- First-aid kit and medications
- Personal toiletries and items, such as an extra pair of glasses or contact lenses
- Copy of your emergency plan, copies of important documents, such as insurance papers
- Cash in small bills
- Garbage bags and moist towelettes for personal sanitation
- Seasonal clothing, sturdy footwear and emergency blanket
- Dust masks if you live in an area that's prone to earthquakes
- Whistle
- [Help/OK Sign \(PDF\)](#): Display the appropriate side outward in your window during a disaster.



PreparedBC

BASIC EMERGENCY KIT SUPPLIES

gov.bc.ca/PreparedBC



First aid kit, prescriptions and other personal items



Emergency plan, copies of important documents and cash



Garbage bags, moist towelettes and plastic ties



Battery-powered or hand-crank radio



Phone charger and battery bank



Blanket, seasonal clothing and footwear



Battery-powered or hand-crank flashlight



Non-perishable food for at least three days



Water for at least three days; four litres per person per day



Whistle

Build a Grab-and-go Bag

You may need to leave immediately in the event of an emergency. Be ready to go by having a smaller version of your emergency kit in an easy-to-access place in your home. In addition to having one at home, create grab-and-go bags for your workplace and vehicles that contain:

- Food (ready to eat) and water
- Phone charger and battery bank
- Small battery-powered or hand-crank radio
- Battery-powered or hand-crank flashlight
- Extra batteries
- Small first-aid kit and personal medications
- Personal toiletries and items, such as an extra pair of glasses or contact lenses
- Copy of your emergency plan, copies of important documents, such as insurance papers
- Cash in small bills
- Local map with your family meeting place identified
- Seasonal clothing and an emergency blanket
- Pen and notepad
- Whistle





Coronavirus COVID-19

BC Centre for Disease Control | BC Ministry of Health



HOW YOU CAN SLOW THE SPREAD OF COVID-19

Take care of others by taking care of yourself.

Wash your hands, don't touch your face, and stay home if you are sick.

Stay at Home and Physically Distance

Stay at home whenever you can. Maintain 2 meters distance from those outside of your household.

Wildfire Smoke and COVID-19

April 17, 2020

What is the concern?

- There is an ongoing COVID-19 pandemic in British Columbia, and the wildfire season is now underway.
- Wildfire smoke is a complex mixture of different air pollutants that can affect your health ([link](#)).
- Exposure to air pollution can irritate the lungs, cause inflammation, and alter immune function, making it more difficult to fight respiratory infections such as COVID-19.
- When conditions are smoky, more people who are exposed to the novel coronavirus may develop COVID-19 and some cases of COVID-19 may become more severe.

Who is at most risk?

- Those who have been diagnosed with COVID-19 or another respiratory infection.
- Those who have pre-existing respiratory conditions such as asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), interstitial lung disease (ILD), or lung cancer.
- Those who are taking chemotherapy or drugs that suppress the immune system.
- Those who have other risk factors that make them more susceptible to both wildfire smoke and COVID-19, such as older age, diabetes, heart disease, and insecure housing.
- Wildfire smoke exposure is also a concern for pregnant women, infants, children, and socially marginalized people ([link](#)).

What should you do if you have symptoms?

- Exposure to wildfire smoke and COVID-19 can both cause respiratory symptoms such as a dry cough, sore throat, or difficulty breathing.
- Anyone experiencing severe symptoms such as difficulty breathing, or chest pain should seek prompt medical attention by calling 9-1-1 or going to the nearest Emergency Department. It is safe to do so.
- If you are experiencing mild symptoms, use the [BC COVID-19 Self-Assessment Tool](#) to help determine whether you need further assessment or testing for COVID-19.
- If you still have questions after using the self-assessment tool, contact your healthcare provider or call 8-1-1 for further guidance.



Ministry of Health



BC Centre for Disease Control

If you have fever, a new cough, or are having difficulty breathing, call 8-1-1.

Non-medical inquiries
(ex. travel, physical distancing):

1-888-COVID19 (1888-268-4319)
or text 604-630-0300



How can you find cleaner air during the COVID-19 pandemic?

- The best way to protect against the potentially harmful effects of wildfire smoke is to reduce exposure and seek cleaner air spaces.
- Finding cleaner air can be more challenging under strict physical distancing guidelines, because public facilities such as libraries, community centres, and shopping malls are closed.
- Consider creating a cleaner air space at home to protect yourself from wildfire smoke during the COVID-19 pandemic.
 - Use a portable air cleaner in one or more rooms ([link](#)). Portable air cleaners work best when run continuously with doors and windows closed.
 - Whenever possible, use air conditioners, heat pumps, evaporative coolers, fans, and window shades to keep your cleaner air space comfortably cool on hot days. Overheating can cause serious health problems ([link](#)).
 - If you have a forced air system in your home, talk to your service provider about different filters and settings that can be used to reduce indoor smoke.
- Avoid activities that create more indoor and outdoor air pollution, such as frying foods, sweeping and vacuuming, and using gas-powered appliances.
- Although some face masks can provide protection from wildfire smoke, medical masks and N95 respirators MUST be reserved for frontline healthcare workers during the pandemic.

What else can you do to stay healthy if it gets smoky this summer?

- Get prepared for the wildfire smoke season as you would do in any other summer ([link](#)).
- If you have a chronic health condition, work with your healthcare providers to create a management plan for smoky conditions.
- If you use rescue medications, make sure that you have an ample supply at home and carry them with you at all times during the wildfire season.
- Limit outdoor exercise when it is smoky outside, or choose lower-intensity activities to reduce smoke exposure ([link](#)).
- Use the Air Quality Health Index (AQHI) to evaluate local and regional air quality conditions ([link](#)).
- Know where to find other reliable information on wildfire smoke and air quality ([link](#)).

April 17, 2020
Wildfire Smoke and COVID-19





Smoky Skies Information

About Air Quality Advisories

An air quality advisory is issued when pollutant concentrations approach or exceed predetermined limits, or when degraded-air-quality episodes are expected to continue or worsen.

Advisories are issued in order to:

- inform about degraded air quality;
- help people make informed choices about reducing their exposure to elevated concentrations of air pollutants;
- affect emission reduction actions (such as a limit on industrial emissions and/or wood stove use); and
- provide vulnerable individuals and the general public with health advice developed by BC health agencies.

About Smoky Skies Bulletins

The Smoky Skies Bulletin is a special type of public advisory to communicate the rapidly changing nature of wildfire smoke. It is issued when areas of the province are being impacted or have reasonable potential to be impacted by wildfire smoke within 24-48 hours. These bulletins are based on available pollutant concentrations information, satellite information, smoke forecast models and visual observations, and are not intended to manage local emission sources.

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.

During smoky conditions

Follow your common sense

- Stop or reduce your activity level if breathing becomes uncomfortable or you feel unwell.



Interior Region

Dākelh Dené | Ktunaxa | N. St'át'imc | Nlaka'pamux | Secwepemc | Syilx | Tsilhqot'in

- 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.



Dākelh Dené | Ktunaxa | N. St'át'imc | Nlaka'pamux | Secwepemc | Syilx | Tsilhqot'in

More information

For additional general information about wildfire smoke and air quality:

- Current Air Quality Health Index (AQHI) and air quality measurements: <http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/epd/bcairquality/data/aqhi-table.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>.



Interior Region

Däkelh Dené | Ktunaxa | N. St'át'imc | Nlaka'pamux | Secwepemc | Syilx | Tsilhqot'in

Contact information

Media and public inquiries regarding air quality and this bulletin:

Gail Roth, Air Quality Meteorologist, Ministry of Environment & Climate Change Strategy, 250-645-9358.

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

Interior Health Authority

Media line: 1-844-469-7077

Email: media@interiorhealth.ca



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Health through wellness

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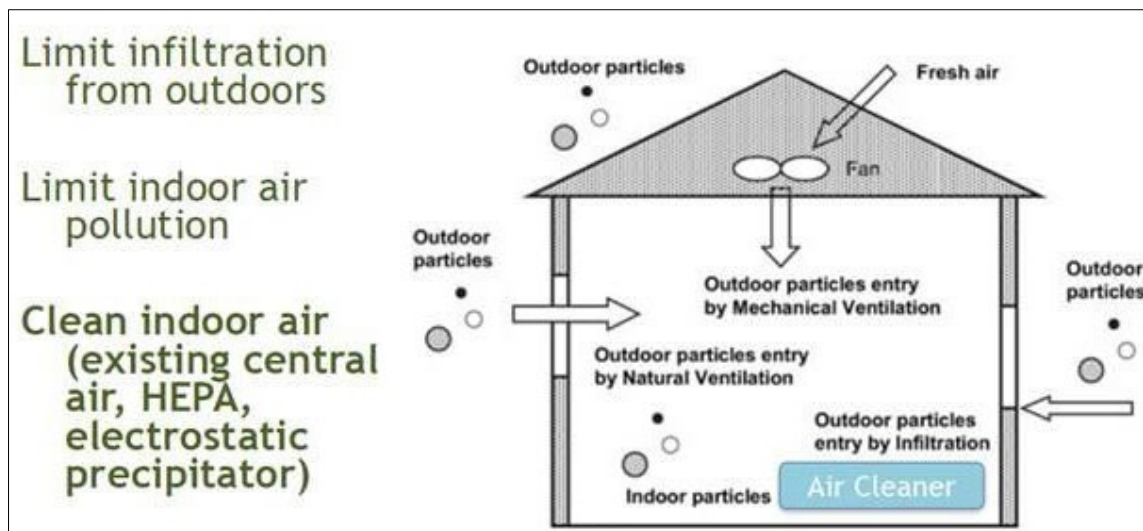
Wildfire Smoke – Home Clean Air Shelters

Wildfire smoke can have additional health risks for vulnerable populations or create irritating symptoms in healthy individuals. Staying indoors is recommended during smoke events to reduce exposure to smoke. Creating a clean air shelter is effective to reduce exposure. If your area is regularly impacted by smoke, plan your clean air shelters before the smoke season so that you are prepared.

Clean air shelters are areas, rooms or buildings that have a filtration system that reduces the amount of particulates generated by wildfire smoke. The objective, as in the image below, is to limit outdoor air entering the home, avoid creating indoor air pollutants, and filtering indoor air.

There are no specific standards or air quality measurements for clean air shelters. A review of science-based literature has shown that central air units are effective at reducing particulate materials/matter.

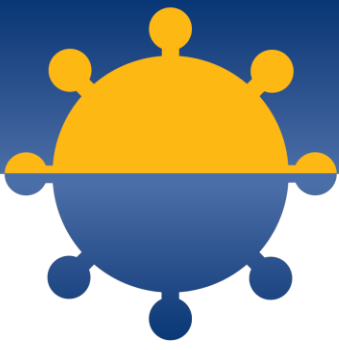
Home clean air shelter (home-CAS) is your home, or room of your home, with filtration that is suitable for reducing smoke exposure.



- ✓ Close all windows and doors.
- ✓ Seal cracks around doors and windows.
- ✓ Turn off exhaust fans, window air conditioners or other external vents.
- ✓ A central air system or air conditioning system can be used.
- ✓ Turn the fresh-air intake off and set to recirculate.
- ✓ A high efficiency particulate air (HEPA) filter is best; however conventional filters will lower PM levels to a lesser degree.

- ✓ Portable air cleaners (HEPA or electrostatic air filters) can be very effective at reducing smoke particles. Be sure that the unit is appropriately sized for the room.
- ✓ Avoid creating other air pollution (e.g. smoking, burning candles, gas and wood stoves, and certain cleaning products). Avoid vacuuming which can stir up dust.
- ✓ During heat events, air conditioning may be needed to keep the home cool and reduce heat stress.
- ✓ During periods when smoke clears open windows and doors to provide fresh air into the home.

If you do not have a central air system or access to a portable air cleaner, taking the steps above to limit smoke entering the home will still help to reduce smoke levels in the home. Ground floor or basement levels tend to be cooler and may be less impacted by smoke.



Guidance for community cooling centres in the context of COVID-19

August 10, 2020

Extreme hot weather can pose a serious and immediate health threat. Risk of illness due to hot weather is much higher than risk of illness due to COVID-19 when community transmission is low.

This guidance document is intended to help municipalities establish and run emergency community cooling centres during the COVID-19 pandemic. It may also be a useful resource for other types of operators, including community-based organizations and housing.

The guidance provided here may change as the regional or provincial situation changes, and as new scientific information becomes available. Refer to BC Centre for Disease Control website (www.bccdc.ca) for updates.

Introduction

Overheating during extreme hot weather can lead to dangerous health conditions [such as heat exhaustion and heat stroke](#). Some people are more susceptible to hot weather, including older adults, infants and children, those with chronic diseases, outdoor workers, and marginalized populations.

The best way for everyone to prevent adverse health effects associated with hot weather is to stay inside or seek cooler spaces.

Community cooling centres provide a comfortable environment during extreme hot weather, but steps should be taken to reduce risk of COVID-19 transmission in centres during the pandemic. These guidelines include general considerations that apply to all types of cooling centres, and more specific considerations for four different types of cooling centres:

1. Indoor spaces with *central* air conditioning
2. Indoor spaces with *portable* air conditioning
3. Indoor spaces with *no* air conditioning
4. Outdoor cooling centres

In addition to these guidelines, each community location should develop and document its own [COVID-19 Safety Plan](#) using [tools and strategies for safer operations during the COVID-19 pandemic](#) as recommended by the BCCDC. All staff and volunteers should be familiar with the COVID-19 Safety Plan, which must include information about staying home when they have any symptoms of COVID-19, even if the symptoms are mild.



Staying Cool

Overheating occurs when normal human body temperature cannot be maintained. There are two important strategies for staying cool during hot weather:

1. Create cooling spaces with ambient temperatures within a comfortable human range, usually lower than 26°C.
2. Maintain healthy body temperature by hydration and evaporative cooling through the skin.

The human body cools itself by sweating, so drinking lots of water is critically important during hot weather, even for those who do not feel thirsty. Sweat provides the most effective cooling when air from a natural breeze or a fan moves over the skin and evaporates the moisture. Applying water directly to the skin using a sprayer, a wet towel, or a wet shirt can also help to promote evaporative cooling, especially in situations when the ambient temperature is high. Other tips to beat the heat during COVID-19 can be found [here](#).

COVID-19 Safety Considerations for all Cooling Centres

Cooling centres can bring together large groups of people in a time when bigger spaces and fewer faces are needed. General public health COVID-19 safety principles apply during the setup, operation, and take down of cool spaces.

How a cooling centre looks, operates, and feels ensures that all visitors will feel safe to seek heat relief when they need it, including those with physical, mental, or communication barriers.

The following precautions should be in place to reduce risk of COVID-19 transmission among visitors and staff:

- **Be aware of COVID-19 symptoms:** Post [signs](#) outside the cooling centre asking people to not enter if they are sick or are required to self-isolate. Refer anyone who self-identifies with symptoms consistent with COVID-19 to the [COVID-19 Self-Assessment Tool](#) or 8-1-1 for further information.
Please note that the early signs of heat stress, such as headache, fatigue, and elevated body temperature, are similar to those of COVID-19 and people who self-identify with such symptoms should not be denied access. Instead, they should be asked to wear a mask and should be physically distanced from other users. Elevated body temperature due to heat stress may take up to 30 minutes to normalize in a cool environment. If body temperature does not normalize, additional assessment may be needed.
- **Provide more space:** Opening larger cooling centres and more locations will help to reduce crowding. Staff and volunteers should know the locations of other cooling centres nearby, so they can direct visitors if maximum capacity is reached. Municipalities may consider partnering with other businesses and organizations for alternative cooling sites.
- **Maintain physical distance:** A distance of two metres between people who are not part of the same group is ideal. Separate furniture so that people are not oriented face-to-face and are not sitting near fans or air conditioners that could blow air from one person to another. Consider installing a TV and having visitors facing in the same direction, or offer free WiFi access so that socializing with other visitors is not the only form of entertainment.



- **Moderate the number of visitors:** Determine the safe occupancy of the space depending on its size and layout, then post the maximum capacity outside the centre and in any online information. Use personnel to moderate how many people may enter the space while maintaining appropriate physical distance. Within the space, also determine limits for the number of people in washrooms or other rooms and post [signs](#) that indicate occupancy limits for rooms. Floor decals or directional signs can help ensure spacing while people gather.
- **Maintain records:** Ask people to register with a name and phone number at the time of entry, but not as a barrier to access. Tell visitors that in the case that a COVID-19 outbreak occurs, collecting contact information will help public health tracing. Create a data handling protocol to ensure the privacy of users and keep records for at least 30 days. Consider the use of [physical barriers](#) at the point of registration.
- **Promote hand hygiene:** Hand hygiene facilities and [posters](#) should be available at the entrance, exits and throughout the space. Washrooms should remain open to visitors. Washing hands with soap and water is best, but if not available use hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.
- **Establish enhanced cleaning protocols:** Routine cleaning should be conducted daily, with enhanced cleaning of high-touch surfaces (e.g. washrooms, drinking fountains, tables, chairs) at least twice daily. Follow [BCCDC cleaning and disinfecting recommendations](#) and choose furniture that can be easily cleaned. All recycling and garbage bins should be lined with plastic bags.
- **Consider the role of masks:** When recommended distancing measures are applied, there should be limited contact between individuals, and visitors should be allowed to choose whether to wear non-medical masks or face coverings as an additional layer of protection. Masks should not be worn by young children, anyone who has trouble breathing, or anyone who cannot remove the mask without assistance.

Specific Technical Guidance for Different Types of Cooling Centres

Indoor spaces with central air conditioning

Large facilities with mechanical heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) systems are the best option for indoor cooling during COVID-19. It is very important to ensure that the HVAC system is operating properly, as poor ventilation is a risk factor for COVID-19 transmission.

- Consult with HVAC professionals to ensure that the system is working properly prior to establishing the cooling centre.
 - Reduce air recirculation and increase the fresh air intake as much as possible while maintaining comfortable indoor temperature and humidity.
 - Check to assure that fresh air dampers are operating properly.
 - Leave the ventilation system fans running to keep the air fresh – turn them *down* rather than *off*, to save power when the space is unoccupied.
 - Keep areas near HVAC air supply and exhaust clear of people and objects.
- Consider using passive methods such as outdoor awnings, shades, window films, or greenery to reduce cooling costs by limiting heating by direct sunlight.



Indoor spaces with portable air conditioning

Portable air conditioners can be used to provide cooling in smaller spaces with adequate mechanical ventilation. They should not be used in spaces without mechanical ventilation, as they may lead to recirculation of the COVID-19 virus when doors and windows are closed.

- Follow the same HVAC guidance provided above.
- If purchasing new air conditioning units, consider the similarities and differences between single and dual hose units:
 - Both types intake, cool, and recirculate air from the room. Mechanical ventilation is required to introduce adequate fresh air into the room.
 - Neither type is typically equipped with high efficiency (HEPA) air filters.
 - Single hose units use air from the room to maintain their internal temperature, and then vent that air outdoors. This creates negative pressure and leads to air from outside of the room being drawn in to replace the air that has been lost.
 - Dual hose units use outdoor air to maintain their internal temperature, and then vent it back to the outdoors. This leads to slightly more recirculation of air in the room, because air from outside of the room not being pulled inwards.
 - In general, dual hose units cool more effectively and single hose units use less energy.
- Direct airflow from the air conditioner away from people, so that respiratory droplets from one person cannot be carried into the breathing zone of another person.
- Seating should not be arranged near the air conditioner.

Indoor spaces without air conditioning

Some indoor spaces without mechanical ventilation or air conditioning can be effectively cooled with natural ventilation and fans.

- Choose a space that is naturally cooler, such as a well-ventilated basement or north-facing room, preferably with high ceilings.
- Choose a space that has windows and doors on multiple walls, to increase the natural cross breeze.
- Open windows and doors as much as possible.
- Use outdoor awnings, shades, or greenery to reduce direct sunlight coming through the windows.
- Use ceiling or oscillating wall fans to direct air downwards.
- Avoid pedestal, tabletop, and floor fans that could circulate respiratory droplets at breathing height.
- Avoid power breezers, blowers, or air conditioning units with strong, horizontal airflow across the breathing zone.
- Consider evaporative (swamp) coolers when the relative humidity is lower.

Outdoor spaces

Risk of COVID-19 transmission is lower outdoors than indoors, which makes outdoor cooling areas an attractive option during the pandemic.



- Whenever possible, choose an area that is:
 - Shady and breezy throughout the day.
 - Surrounded by large trees and other vegetation, which provide shade and evaporative cooling.
 - Away from heavy traffic, to reduce urban heat, and air and noise pollution.
 - Near natural or constructed water features such as oceans, lakes, rivers, streams, large fountains, or [spray parks](#).
- Ensure that water for drinking and cooling is easily accessible:
 - Nearby washrooms facilitate hand hygiene and water access. Remember to post maximum recommended capacity signs.
 - Nearby water fountains provide drinking water and cooling water that can be used to spray on, soak towels or clothing.
 - Consider establishing sprinklers.

Other Considerations

Humidity

Higher humidity affects evaporative cooling, which makes hot weather more uncomfortable. The [humidex](#) value is often reported in Canada. Cooling options with air conditioning offer the best protection when the reported humidex is greater than 40°C.

Wildfire smoke

Hot and dry weather is often associated with wildfires in British Columbia. Extra considerations are needed for cooling centres under smoky conditions during the pandemic:

- Indoor spaces without air conditioning and outdoor spaces should not be used.
- Indoor spaces with mechanical ventilation should consider increasing air filtration by the air handling units in the HVAC system. Filters with a minimum efficiency reporting value of 13 or higher are recommended whenever possible.
- Supplementary air filtration with portable air cleaners should be considered, especially in smaller spaces using portable air conditioners.
- Only well-fitted certified N95 respirators provide effective protection from the particles in wildfire smoke. Non-medical masks and face coverings offer limited protection.

Legionella

The bacteria that cause Legionnaires disease can grow in stagnant water. Follow guidance provided by [WorkSafeBC](#) for proper maintenance of hot and cold water systems, including all cooling towers, piping, faucets, shower heads, ice machines, and decorative water features.



Frequently Asked Questions

What is the most important thing to consider when opening cooling centres during the pandemic?

- Cooling centres provide heat relief, especially for vulnerable individuals. Extra risks due to COVID-19 can be managed with precautions. Extreme hot weather can pose a serious and immediate health threat. Risk of illness due to hot weather is much higher than risk of illness due to COVID-19 when community transmission is low.

What kind of cooling devices should be used, and what kinds should be avoided?

- Central air conditioning should be prioritized over portable air conditioning. If portable air conditioners must be used, they should only be used in facilities with mechanical ventilation to provide fresh air. Without mechanical ventilation, portable air conditioners will simply recirculate the air in a room with doors and windows closed, which can lead to higher risk of COVID-19 transmission.
- Ceiling and wall fans that blow air downwards are better than floor, pedestal, and table fans that may blow respiratory droplets from one person into the breathing zone of another person.
- Power breezers, blowers, or air conditioning units with strong, horizontal airflow across the breathing zone should be avoided.
- Evaporative foggers and misters can provide effective cooling when the humidity is low.

What kind of features should be avoided?

- Spaces that are too small for adequate physical distancing.
- Seating such as picnic tables, where people who are not in the same social circle are sitting directly across from each other.
- Seating that is too close to fans or air conditioning units.
- Spaces with no running water for hand hygiene, drinking, and evaporative cooling.

What if there are more people in need than the maximum capacity of the cooling centre?

- When community transmission of COVID-19 is low, heat is a bigger health risk for most people.
- Refer individuals to other nearby cooling centres whenever possible.
- Occupancy limits should not be used to deny access, but they should be used to guide management of the cooling centre.
- If the cooling centre is beyond the maximum capacity designed to support physical distancing, non-medical masks and face coverings should be used to help reduce the COVID-19 risks. Cooling centres should keep a supply of disposable masks available for such contingencies.
- Some private facilities or housing complexes may be able to establish their own centres using resources available from [BC Housing](#) (video; 1:17:02).

What can be done for people who are currently infected with or recovering from COVID-19?

- People infected with or recovering from COVID-19 may be more vulnerable to heat stress.
- Those who are recovering from COVID-19 can attend cooling centres if they meet the requirements for [ending isolation](#).



- Those currently infected with COVID-19 should be supported in their own homes.
- Family and friends should check in with COVID-19 patients via telephone to ensure that they are able to cope with heat. It may be necessary to supply cooling equipment to those who cannot leave their home, including patients with active infections, people who are recovering, and those who are self-isolating for other reasons.
- People who are unsheltered should refer to the BCCDC's website for assistance or call 1-888-COVID19 (1-888-268-4319).

August 7, 2020

Guidance for community cooling centres in the context of COVID-19



Communique: Air Purifier Distribution – 2020 Fire Season

Due to wildfire smoke in various areas of the province, there may be circumstances where in-home air purifiers are an appropriate solution to provide cleaner air. Public health evidence tells us that certain people are at more risk to wildfire smoke and preferential access to air purifiers is appropriate. Due to limited availability and to ensure units are available to individuals most vulnerable, FNHA will consider supplying units as follows:

Individuals with chronic conditions such as asthma, heart disease, or diabetes, as well as pregnant women, infants, young children, and the elderly; **AND one or more of the following**,

- Remote community / housing with limited access to community clean air shelters;
- Homes that do not have ventilation systems that can recirculate; or,
- Individuals with transportation limitations and unable to access a community clean air shelter;
- Respiratory symptoms consistent with COVID-19 *or* a positive COVID-19 test *or* a close contact of a positive COVID-19 test

If your community has individuals who meet the above criteria, please contact the following Environmental Public Health staff:

Northern: Paul Broda (Paul.Broda@fnha.ca)

Interior: Casey Neathway (casey.neathway@fnha.ca)

Fraser Salish: Amber Lee (Amber.Lee@fnha.ca)

Vancouver Coastal: Amber Lee (Amber.Lee@fnha.ca)

Vancouver Island: Peter Mazey (Peter.Mazey@fnha.ca)

Your local Environmental Health Officer (EHO)

Reimbursement to communities is considered provided that purchases are designated for individuals most vulnerable (as determined by community health staff), and:

- HEPA or electronic precipitation units as per the attached BC Lung Association guidance on Portable Air Cleaners for Wildfire Smoke
- Purchase limit of \$1,000 per community, or explanation of need beyond this limit
- Invoice and copy of purchase receipts to: Connie Wong (Connie.Wong@fnha.ca)

For more information, watch BCCDC's videos on Air Cleaners:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gq69AHSEQ6I>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ShRQ75Sa74A>

If you received or purchased HEPA filters during past wildfire seasons, ensure that the filters are still in good condition and replace if appropriate.

Community Clean Air Shelters: By now, your local EHO has likely been in contact with your community about an appropriate location for a community clean air shelter, including considerations for physical distancing and preventing the spread of COVID-19. If you are not aware of where this building is, or would like to discuss options, please contact FNHA staff listed above.

Regional air quality information (Air Quality Health Index):

<http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/epd/bcairquality/readings/aqhi-table.xml>

More info on wildfire smoke: <http://www.fnha.ca/what-we-do/environmental-health/wildfire-information>

Attachment:

Portable Air Cleaners for Wildfire Smoke, BC Lung Association

Portable Air Cleaners for Wildfire Smoke

Prepared by Dr. Menn Biagtan, VP Health Initiatives & Partnerships, BC Lung Association

Wildfire smoke is a complex mixture of air pollutants, including small particles that can cause irritation and inflammation when inhaled. Although wildfire smoke is generated outdoors, it can travel indoors through windows, doors, vents, and other openings in the building envelope.

Most people spend up to 90% of their time indoors, where portable air cleaners can be used to improve air quality and reduce the health impacts of wildfire smoke.

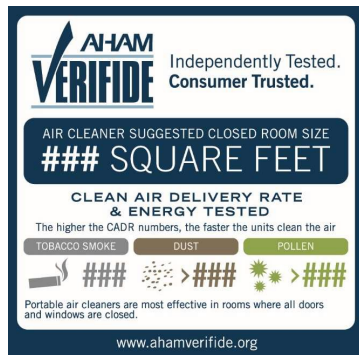
- Portable air cleaners are mobile units that plug into regular wall sockets and can be moved between rooms. They work by drawing air in from the surrounding area, reducing its pollutant concentrations, and then releasing into the surrounding area.
- Studies have tested indoor portable air cleaners on real-world pollution from many different sources, including wildfire smoke. In most of these studies, portable air cleaners have reduced small particle concentrations by 40-80%.
- Use of portable air cleaners has been associated with better lung function, lower blood pressure, and reduced inflammation in children and adults.
- The people who can benefit most from portable air cleaners are those with asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), heart disease, pregnant women, infants and young children, and the elderly.

Most portable air cleaners use one of two mechanisms to remove particles from indoor air: HEPA filtration or electrostatic precipitation.

- HEPA units use mechanical suction to pull air across a high efficiency filter designed to trap particles as small as 0.3 micrometers in diameter.
- Electrostatic precipitators electrically charge the incoming stream of small particles and collect them on oppositely charged metal plates. This process can create ozone gas, which can be a lung irritant. People with respiratory conditions should consider purchasing HEPA filtration units.
- Both HEPA filtration and electrostatic precipitation can only remove particles from the air. However, some portable air cleaners also have activated carbon filters that can address the gaseous pollutants in wildfire smoke.
- Ozone generators and negative ionizers cannot effectively remove smoke particles from the air.

There are many kinds of portable air cleaners on the market, so it is important to do some research before making a purchase.

- Look for a unit certified by the Association of Home Appliance Manufacturers (AHAM), with a label similar to the one shown here:



The AHAM label clearly indicates the square footage of the area that each unit can clean. Be sure to find one that is appropriate for your space, and to use it where people spend most of their time.

The AHAM label also indicates the clean air delivery rate (CADR) for particles of different sizes, including tobacco smoke, dust, and pollen. Tobacco smoke is most similar to wildfire smoke.

- Portable air cleaners certified in the State of California are subject to higher standards than those sold elsewhere. All units on the list certified by the California Air Resources Board (tinyurl.com/yco32kou) are also tested for electrical safety and low ozone emissions, and some may be available for purchase in Canada.
- Like all appliances, portable air cleaners must be maintained to continue working properly. Look for a unit that clearly indicates when the HEPA filter needs to be replaced, or when the electrostatic collector plates need to be cleaned.
- Prices range from less than \$100 to more than \$1000 per unit. Online reviews from other users can provide useful information about perceived effectiveness, reliability, and noise levels, which help you to evaluate which unit may work best for your household .

Portable air cleaners work best when run continuously with the doors and windows closed.

- Use portable air cleaners in the same rooms as window or mobile air conditioning units if you do not have central air conditioning .
- Closing doors and windows can be dangerous on hot days if you do not have air conditioning. Be aware of your body temperature and use common sense. For most people, heat stress is a bigger health risk than smoky air.
- If you do not have air conditioning and it is too hot to keep doors and windows closed, try to locate a clean air shelter in your community. Libraries, recreation centers, and shopping malls often have relatively cleaner and cooler indoor air.

PREPARING FOR WILDFIRE EVACUATION

If you reside in an area that is experiencing wildfires with a potential for evacuation alerts or orders, there are some things you can do to prepare that will make this stressful time a little easier to manage.

The most important thing to remember is to stay calm, listen to your local public officials, and if possible, access online social media channels like Twitter or your local government website for information updates.

Evacuation Alerts

In the event, an evacuation alert is issued for your area; you will need to prepare to leave your home on very short notice. Stay tuned to your local authority's public information channels, as well as Emergency Info BC (www.emergencyinfobc.gov.bc.ca) for updates.

Have your emergency kit and important documents ready to go, which should include:

- ❑ Insurance and personal papers such as birth certificates
- ❑ Several days' clothing.
- ❑ Medicine/prescriptions.
- ❑ Consider your pets and get leashes, carriers and pet food ready to go.
- ❑ Also consider the kids and bring some comfort items, like a favorite toy or colouring books to help keep them busy.
- ❑ Don't forget to check in on family, friends and neighbours who may have mobility or other issues to contend with.
- ❑ This is a good time to collect precious photos and mementos that can't be replaced.

Evacuation Orders

If you are told the time has come to evacuate, you must leave the area immediately. Failing to leave when asked to by officials puts yourself and others at risk.

Here is what you should do when an evacuation order is issued:

- ❑ Grab your emergency kit and follow the directions to the identified reception centre.
- ❑ Follow the routes specified by emergency officials. Don't take shortcuts. A shortcut could take you to a blocked or dangerous area.
- ❑ Take critical items already in your kit - medicine, purse, wallet and keys.
- ❑ Take your pets in kennels or on a leash.
- ❑ Close all doors and windows. Close and latch gates, but do not lock them.
- ❑ Take a cell phone if you have one.
- ❑ If there is time and it is safe to do, shut off water at the main line into your home, and switch off electricity at the breaker panel. Leave natural gas service 'on'.

Your local authority officials will advise you when it's safe to return home.

To learn more about being evacuation prepared watch the following video:

http://youtu.be/XujT_6SaFko



Evacuation Planning for Pet Owners

Source: <https://news.gov.bc.ca/stories/evacuation-essentials-for-pet-owners>

During an emergency, British Columbians are responsible for more than just their own personal safety. They need to consider how they will keep their pets, animals and other furry friends safe as well. It's important to know how to prepare for an emergency and where you can get help with your animals during an evacuation.

In addition to having a 72-hour emergency kit for your family, you must also prepare one for your pet. Preparing in advance will increase the likelihood that your animals remain safe and healthy during an emergency.

Your pet survival kit should include:

- 72-hour food supply including bowls and a can opener if required
- 72-hour supply of water for your pet
- Leash, harness, muzzle
- Pet carrier
- Medical and vaccination records, medication and veterinarian contact information
- ID tags and microchip number
- Blankets and toys

Before an evacuation, find out what resources are available in your community for pets and animals during an emergency. It may be possible to preregister with the local emergency animal rescue group in your area so members can assist you in preparing for your animals during an emergency.

If emergency officials order your community to evacuate to a safer location, it's important to remember that if it's not safe for you to stay home, it's not safe for pets to remain there either. Make the evacuation reception centre your first point of contact and ask them to put you in touch with any local animal assistance organization. Experienced volunteers at Emergency Social Services reception centres will receive pets at reception centres and move them to a safe place where they will be cared for until you're able to care for them.

Learn more:

For up-to-date information on evacuation orders and public safety notices, visit your local authority information sources and: www.EmergencyInfoBC.gov.bc.ca

For individuals concerned about livestock during an evacuation, visit: <http://www.agf.gov.bc.ca/emergency/Evacuation/Evacuation.htm>

For more information about animal care, visit: <http://bit.ly/UkyM8C>

Emergency Evacuee Guidance During COVID-19

Due to the evolving nature of the COVID-19 pandemic, this page may be regularly updated. Check back often for the most up-to-date information. (<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/emergency-preparedness-response-recovery/emergency-response-and-recovery/emergency-evacuees>)

In all emergencies, evacuees are under a great deal of stress. Providing services to all people in a respectful, caring, and culturally safe environment is key to a successful recovery. COVID-19 poses challenges with the delivery of supports. They may be delivered through alternative means in order to protect responders, essential service workers and evacuees.

Your local or First Nations government is responsible for planning for and responding to emergency events within their jurisdiction. This includes coordinating the provision of food, clothing, shelter, transportation and incidentals for evacuees. Governments work closely with health authorities to ensure medical services for residents.

Evacuation Stages

Depending on the severity of the situation, an evacuation alert or order may be issued. It's important to understand the different stages.

- **Evacuation Alert:** Be ready to leave on short notice
- **Evacuation Order:** You are at risk. Leave the area immediately
- **Evacuation Rescinded:** All is currently safe and you can return home

To be ready, [know your hazards](#) and follow [PreparedBC's guides](#) to prepare yourself, family, home or business in case an evacuation is ordered.

What to do when you receive an Evacuation Order

During an Evacuation Order, evacuees should do the following:

1. Follow instructions on where to go provided by your Local Authority or government
2. Visit [Emergency Info BC](#) or follow [@EmergencyInfoBC](#) for news and updates
3. Wait for the evacuation to be rescinded before returning home

Lab-confirmed COVID-19 positive

If you have been lab-confirmed COVID-19 positive and receive an evacuation order to leave home:

- Connect with your case manager to receive latest health system information pertinent to evacuation
- Your local or First Nations government will provide you with the appropriate COVID-19 positive reception site
- If possible:

- Evacuate by your own vehicle. If you do not have a personal vehicle, ask your case manager for instructions
- Maintain physical distancing while travelling
- Proceed immediately to designated accommodations using the most direct, safe route

Under Self-isolation Order or Have Symptoms

If you receive an Evacuation Order and are **under a self-isolation order related to COVID-19** (for example temporary foreign workers (TFW), recently returned to Canada, part of a contact tracing investigation) **or have been advised to self-isolate** after using the [B.C. Self-Assessment tool](#):

- **Self-isolation Order only:** connect with your case manager for health system information and direction
- If possible evacuate by your own vehicle. If you do not have a personal vehicle follow guidance for public transportation
- Proceed immediately to designated accommodations or a reception centre (if necessary)
- Continue to follow the Provincial Health Office advice on physical distancing, frequently washing your hands and avoid touching your face

Where to go if you receive an Evacuation Order

Only travel to ESS support locations designated by your local or First Nations' government. Supports will not be available if you travel to a non-designated location.

Evacuees should first look to use their own resources, such as insurance, to support themselves. Staying with friends or family (also referred to as billeting) is not recommended during the COVID-19 pandemic. If you don't have your own resources the ESS program may be able to support you.

Delivery of Supports

Evacuees are encouraged to follow the direction of your local or First Nations' government.

Each jurisdiction will be different, however some can perform the following support services remotely.

- Evacuee registration
- Needs assessments
- Providing information
- Referrals for ESS supports (including food, accommodation, transportation, incidentals and clothing)

If in-person delivery of support is required, ESS responders will follow public health officer recommendations, including frequent hand washing and physical distance.

Group Lodging

Group lodging under the ESS program is not supported by EMBC during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Depending on the size of the evacuation, local and First Nations governments may seek to use economical and efficient methods for lodging evacuees. This may include working with hotels or alternative lodging operations.

Follow the direction of your local or First Nations' government for information on support options available.

Reception Centres

Each jurisdiction has unique needs and operations. If you do go to a modified reception centre you can expect:

- To be placed in accommodation quickly with further needs assessed after
- To remain physically distant from other evacuees
- Clear information posted on reception centre rules
- Extra precautions taken to ensure your safety



First Nations Health Authority
Health through wellness

Recognizing and Resolving Trauma in Children During Disasters

Disasters like wildfires affect individuals in many ways. The emotional effects may show up immediately or appear weeks to months later. Here are some helpful tips for recognizing and responding to trauma in children brought on by disaster situations:



Short to mid-term behaviours you may see in your children who are experiencing trauma could include:

- A return to earlier behaviour, (thumb sucking or bed wetting)
- Clinging to parents, crying and screaming
- Reluctance to go to bed
- Nightmares
- Fantasies that the disaster never happened
- Refusal to attend school
- Problems at school
- Inability to concentrate
- Withdrawal, immobility

It is important to understand that there is a natural grieving process following any loss and a disaster of any size can cause unusual or unwanted stress. If you are seeing any of these behaviours there are things you can do to support.

Below are five tips to keep in mind as communities continue to face the wildfires.

Talk to your children about their feelings and your feelings. You will find that many feelings are shared, regardless of age.

Encourage your children to draw pictures of the disaster. This will help you understand how they view what happened.

Talk with your children about what happened, providing factual information that they can understand. Talk about your family's preparedness, including the role your children can take.

Reassure your children that you and they are safe. Repeat this assurance as often as necessary.

Hold your children. Touch provides extra reassurance that someone is there for them. Spend extra time with them, especially at bedtime. Sing songs or say prayers with them and maintain the spirit of regular family or cultural practices.



First Nations Health Authority
Health through wellness

Recognizing and Addressing Trauma and Anxiety During Wildfire Season

Disasters like wildfires affect individuals in many ways and may affect your emotional, spiritual, physical and mental well-being. The emotional effects may show up immediately or appear weeks to months later.

If you are feeling stressed or anxious this time of year, you are not alone. The fear of having to flee your home, and possibly leave animals and possessions behind can cause distress, fear and anxiety for you and your loved ones. Even the prospect of living with smoky skies during wildfire season can cause distress.

The risks of wildfire season can also trigger stressful thoughts and feelings related to loss of connection to land, home, and traditional foods and medicines. For some First Nations people it can trigger trauma associated with memories of being forcibly removed from home and sent to residential school, Indian hospitals or foster homes. We would like to offer some support.



Recognizing Anxiety and Trauma

Anxiety and trauma related to disasters affect people in different ways. Physical and emotional signs may include:

- Overwhelming feelings of fear, stress and emotional distress – a feeling of being unable to cope
- Acute anxiety, excessive worry and panic attacks
- Feeling down or depressed, angry, sad, confused, low mood
- Trouble breathing
- Trouble eating (including overeating or not eating enough)
- Trouble sleeping (including nightmares, over-sleeping or not sleeping enough)
- Irritability and agitation, feeling jumpy, tense or hypervigilant
- Avoidance or withdrawal – feeling or being unable to meet the demands of what needs to be done (e.g., preparing for evacuation)

Four Tips to Stay Well

It is important to understand that there is a natural grieving process following any loss and a disaster of any size can cause unusual or unwanted stress.

Below are four tips to help you stay mentally, emotionally, physically and spiritually well during wildfire season:

1. Prepare yourself, your family and loved ones

Having a clear emergency or safety plan and kit ready for your family and pets can ease your mind and allow you to focus on other needs. Even if your community has an emergency plan, it is still important to make a plan that addresses the specific needs of your family and household.

2. Take care of the basics

Stress takes a toll on our physical and mental health. Try to eat well and get enough sleep. Be kind to yourself. Give and accept support. Follow your daily routine if possible. Take a break from disaster news coverage and from thinking and talking about disaster events.

3. Ask for help

Whether it's with family, friends, an Elder, cultural supports, doctor, nurse or counsellor—talking helps. Crisis lines are available to listen and help anytime—not just during a crisis*. Those with moderate to severe symptoms that last more than two to four weeks should consult a family physician, if available. Otherwise, reach out to your nearest Mental Health and Substance Use Centre or community nurse.

4. Help others

Check in on Elders and children. Coping may be more difficult for Elders living alone and those who have mental health and wellness concerns, or those with few social supports. Reaching out to connect with them can be a big help.

Other simple actions that you may find helpful are to keep a journal, stay active (and exercise indoors if the air quality is poor), do volunteer work or participate in activities you enjoy (e.g., beading or sewing, singing and drumming).

***IF YOU ARE STRUGGLING RIGHT NOW, confidential, culturally safe support is available 24/7 through the KUU-US Indigenous Crisis Line at: 1-800-558-8717**

More support resources can be found at:

www.fnha.ca/wildfires

Gov.bc.ca/NaturalDisasterHealth.ca

Visit PreparedBC for resources to help you understand the hazards in your location and to create a family emergency plan:

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/emergency-preparedness-response-recovery/preparedbc>

Visit BC Centre for Disease Control for information on wildfire smoke and steps you can take to protect your health, both indoors and outdoors:

<http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/prevention-public-health/wildfire-smoke>



First Nations Health Authority
Health through wellness

First Nations Health Information for Wildfire Evacuees

The First Nations Health Authority would like to provide important information about health and social services for First Nations communities impacted by wildfire in BC.

HEALTH BENEFITS

Refilling Prescriptions

While under an evacuation order, some patients may not have access to their medications and will require a refill or replacement. If you need to replace or refill a prescription for medication, please go to a local pharmacy and they will be able to provide support. If you require any support with this process, please call 1.855.550.5454.

Medical Transportation

If you require patient travel services due to the wildfires, including routine transportation to dialysis and other appointments, please contact FNHA Health Benefits at **1.800.317.7878** and we will guide you through what supports are available.

Medical Supplies and Equipment (Including Oxygen Tanks) and Eyewear

For all medical supplies and equipment, including refill or replacement of oxygen tanks and related products, please contact FNHA Health Benefits at **1.800.317.7878**

For all vision inquiries, including replacement of lost glasses, please contact FNHA Health Benefits at **1.800.317.7878**.

Dental Items (Dentures)

Please contact FNHA Health Benefits at **1.800.317.7878**

MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORTS

Ku-Us Crisis Line: 1-800-KUU-US17 (588-8717)

Available 24-hours a day, seven days a week, regardless of where individuals reside in the province, those in need of support can call for an immediate response.

FNHA Mental Health Counselling

Please contact FNHA Health Benefits at 1.800.317.7878 to be connected with a mental health counsellor.

STAY UP TO DATE

Currently, the main location for updates on wildfire situations within BC can be found at:

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/wildfire-status/wildfire-situation>.

To download the BC Wildfire Services Mobile App:

Apple (iOS): (<https://apps.apple.com/us/app/bc-wildfire-service/id1477675008?ls=1>)

Android: (<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=ca.bc.gov.WildfireInformation&hl=en>)

Information on Wildfires and COVID-19 can be found at:

<http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/prevention-risks/wildfires>

First Nations Health Authority
Interior Region Mental Health and Wellness:
Quick Reference Support Lines



Mental Health and Crisis Support Lines

Hope for Wellness Helpline: 1-855-242-3310

Help Line offers 24 hour immediate mental health counselling and crisis intervention to all Indigenous peoples across Canada.

**Indian Residential School Survivors Society
1-604-985-4464/toll-free: 1-800-721-0066**

KUU-US Crisis Line Society at 1-800-588-8717
Toll Free Aboriginal provincial crisis line operates 24 hour

Tsow-Tun Le Lum Society: 1-250-268-2463
24 hour support line supporting those struggling with addiction substance misuse, supports for trauma, and /or residential school survivors

Addictions and Substance Misuse Supports

Kids Help Line – 1-800-668-6868

Adults Help Line – 1-800-663-1441

Health Link BC 811

MHSU Interior Health 1-888-353-2283

Domestic Violence or Abuse

If you are in immediate danger call 911

Domestic Violence Help Line at 1-800-563-0808
(free, confidential, 24/7, service in multiple languages)

VictimLinkBC at 1-800-563-0808 toll-free, confidential, multilingual telephone service available across B.C. and the Yukon 24 hours a day, 7 days a week

KUU-US Crisis Line Society at 1-800-588-8717
Toll Free Aboriginal provincial crisis line operates 24 hour

Hope for Wellness Helpline: 1-855-242-3310 Help Line offers 24 hour immediate mental health counselling and crisis intervention to all Indigenous peoples across Canada.

Support for Children and Youth

Kids Help Phone: 1-800-668-6868

Helpline for Children in BC: 310-1234

**KUU-US Crisis Line Society Child and Youth
Crisis 1-250-723-2040 or toll free
1-800-588-8717** crisis line operates 24 hour

Online Information Resources

First Nations Health Authority Mental Health and Substance Use:
<https://www.fnha.ca/what-we-do/mental-wellness-and-substance-use>

Canadian Mental Health Association
<https://cmha.ca/>

First Nations Health Authority /novel coronavirus (COVID-19)
<https://www.fnha.ca/what-we-do/communicable-disease-control/coronavirus>

First Nations Health Authority Wildfire Information
<https://www.fnha.ca/what-we-do/environmental-health/wildfire-information>

If you or someone you know is struggling to maintain Mental Wellness you can reach out for support to either to a hotline, a Mental Health Counsellor Clinician, a Doctor, Health Care Provider or Nurse Practitioner in your area.

Mental Health Crisis & Wildfire Support Services

	More About	Contact Information
Wildfire information	See web links for most up to date wildfire information.	BC Wildfire BC Wildfire Map Fires of note Drive BC Emergency Services BC - latest evacuation orders Interior Health Major Events page
First Nations Emergency Services Society (FNESS)	Fire Services, Forest Fuel Management, Emergency Management. Emergency planning, training, response and recovery; Fire training, education and prevention; Forest fuel and wildfire management; and Leadership and collaborative relationships.	BRENT LANGLOIS-FNESS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR P: (250) 457-1687 E: BLANGLOIS@FNESS.BC.CA WEBSITE: HTTP://FNESS.BC.CA/
Emergency Management BC	Emergency Management BC (EMBC) coordinates all emergency management activities, including planning, training, testing and exercising. To report a provincial emergency, contact Emergency Management BC's Emergency Coordination Centre.	P: 1 800 663-3456 E: PREPAREDBC@GOV.BC.CA WEBSITE: HTTPS://WWW2.GOV.BC.CA/GOV/CONTENT/SAFETY/EMERGENCY- PREPAREDNESS-RESPONSE-RECOVERY/CONTACT-US
Crisis Centre BC	The Crisis Intervention and Suicide Prevention Centre of BC (Crisis Centre) provides Mental Health Crisis support for elders, adults and youth. 24/7 telephone support. Online chat available. Confidential and non-judgmental crisis support for people experiencing feelings of distress or despair.	310-1234 (NO AREA CODE) ONLINE CHAT SERVICE FOR YOUTH: WWW.YOUTHINBC.COM (NOON TO 1AM) ONLINE CHAT SERVICE FOR ADULTS: WWW.CRISISCENTRECHAT.CA (NOON TO 1AM) WEBSITE: CRISISCENTRE.BC.CA
First Nations and Inuit Hope for Wellness Help Line and On-line Counselling Service	The Hope for Wellness Help Line offers immediate culturally supportive mental health counselling and crisis intervention to all Indigenous people across Canada.	TOLL FREE: 1-855-242-3310 HOPE FOR WELLNESS CHAT LINE: WWW.HOPEFORWELLNESS.CA HTTPS://WWW.CANADA.CA/EN/INDIGENOUS-SERVICES- CANADA/SERVICES/FIRST-NATIONS-INUIT-HEALTH/HEALTH- PROMOTION/MENTAL-HEALTH-WELLNESS.HTML
FNHA First Nations Benefits	A list of mental health counsellors covered under FNHB in your area.	P: 1-800-317-7878 (TOLL FREE)

Mental Health Service Providers	Available service providers offer crisis counselling to stabilize a person's condition, minimize potential trauma from an acute life event, and, as appropriate, transition someone to other mental health supports.	WEB LINK: HEALTHBENEFITS@FNHA.CA
Kid’s and Teen’s Help Text, Chat, Phone	Confidential phone and on-line professional counselling for kids and teens. Big or small concerns. Texting service is available 24/7/365. You do not need a data plan, Internet connection or an app to use it. Emotional health, dating, LGBTQ, sexting, bullying support.	P: 1-800-668-6868 ONLINE CHAT: HTTPS://KIDSHELPPHONE.CA/LIVE-CHAT/ TEXT TO CONNECT TO: 686868 WEB LINK: HTTPS://KIDSHELPPHONE.CA/
KUU-US Crisis Services	The KUU-US Crisis line is available 24-hours a day, seven days a week – regardless of where you live in BC. If you are in need, you can call and receive an immediate culturally safe support.	TOLL FREE: 1.800.KUU.US17 (1- 800-588-8717) ADULT/ELDER: 250.723.4050 CHILD/YOUTH: 250.723.2040 WEB LINK: HTTP://WWW.KUU-USCRISISLINE.CA/
National Indian Residential School Crisis Line	Indigenous Services Canada offers a national Indian Residential School Crisis Line to support former Residential School students. The crisis line provides emotional and crisis referral services 24 hours per day. Cultural Support Workers and Residential Health Support Workers are available to provide support.	TOLL FREE: 1-866-925-4419 24/7 SUPPORT LINE: 1-866-925-4419 COUNSELLING: 1-877-477-0775 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, CINDY TOM-LINDLEY, T: 1-800-721-0066 WEBSITE: HTTP://IRSSS.CA/
Okanagan Nation Response Team (ONRT)	The Okanagan Nation Response Team, Səx kənxit əlx “Those Who Help” is a team of community members who have received extensive training in the areas of suicide education, community mobilization, and critical incident response.	CRITICAL RESPONSE TEAM LEAD, KIM MONTGOMERY P: (250) 212-0720 E: criticalresponse@syilx.org Website: https://www.syilx.org/wellness/our-programs-and-services/youth-mental-health/okanagan-nation-response-team/
Nenqayni Wellness Centre Society Mobile response team	Located in Williams Lake, BC. Mobile teams are available to provide workshops tailored to community’s needs on a variety of topics including grief and loss, addictions, family violence, communication, anger management, Medicine Wheel,	TOLL-FREE: 1-888-668-4245 T: 250.989.0301 PHILIP JOHNSON, MOBILE PROGRAM COUNSELLOR / T: 250.989.0301 EXT. 227 / EMAIL: PJOHNSON@NENQAYNI.COM JIM ALECK, FAMILY ALCOHOL & DRUG PROGRAM MOBILE OUTREACH / T: 250.989.0301 EXT. 227 / EMAIL: JALECK@NENQAYNI.COM

	<p>parenting, healthy self-esteem, and more.</p> <p>Serves 15 bands around Williams Lake: Ulkatcho, Red Bluff, Nazko, Kluskus, Redstone, Anaham, Stone, Toosey, Nemiah, Alexandria, Alkali Lake, Canim Lake, Dog Creek, Canoe Creek, Williams Lake Band and Soda Creek.</p>	<p>ANDREA CHARLEYBOY, CONTINUING CARE MOBILE PROGRAM / T: 250.989.0301 / EMAIL: ACHARLEYBOY@NENQAYNI.COM</p> <p>WEBSITE: HTTP://NENQAYNI.COM/</p>
Victim Link BC	<p>Information and referrals for all victims of crime. Immediate crisis support to victims of family and sexual violence. Available 24/7.</p>	<p>1-800-563-0808</p> <p>Web link:</p> <p>http://www.victiminfo.ca/en/services/victimlink</p>
Disaster Psychosocial Program (DPS)	<p>DPS program responds to crisis. DPS is able to help with community assessment of needs and collaborative planning. Direct services available include:</p> <p>Psychological first aid – provided by volunteer network of professional mental health workers from within the local region where the crisis occurs.</p> <p>Assessment includes 1-1 support, crisis counselling, outreach and advocacy.</p> <p>Stress management: Individual, group or community sessions.</p>	<p>Provincial Lead, Julie Kaplan / T: 604.375.3487 / email: dpsprogram@phsa.ca</p> <p>Website: http://www.phsa.ca/our-services/programs-services/health-emergency-management-bc/disaster-psychosocial-program</p>
Jordan’s Principle	<p>Jordan's Principle makes sure all First Nations children can access the products, services and supports they need, when they need them. It can help with a wide range of health, social and educational needs.</p>	<p>Jordan's Principle Call Centre:</p> <p>BC ISC Jordan’s Principle BC Region P:1- 778-951-0716</p> <p>E: Principe de Jordan CB - BC Jordans Principle (SAC/ISC) sac.principedejordancb-bcjordansprinciple.isc@canada.ca</p> <p>First Nation Health Authority P: 1-855-JP-CHILD (1-855-572-4453), open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week E: jordans.principle@fnha.ca</p>
FNHA Community Engagement Coordinators	<p>Communication link to the 7 Interior Nations and communities.</p>	<p>Can also provide link to Nation Based Traditional and Cultural Service Providers.</p>
Jamie Tanis	<p>Dakelh Dene</p>	<p>P: (250) 398-7033 C: 250-267-9635 E: Jamie.Tanis@fnha.ca</p>
Tamara George	<p>Nlaka’pamux</p>	<p>P:250 378 9772 ext.119 C: 250 378 7045 E: george.t@nlxfn.com</p>

Bernadette Collins		P:250) 378-9772 ext. 103 E: collins.b@nlxfn.com
Coo-la Louis	Sylix	P: (250) 707-0095 C: 250 869 5364 E: WP.Analyst@sylix.org
Jennifer Lewis	Sylix	C: 250-826-7844 E: wellness.manager@sylix.org
Connie Jasper	Tsilhqot'in	P: (250) 392-3918 C: 250-267-7299 E: Cjasper@tsilhqotin.ca
Shawn Scotchman	Secwepemc	P: (250) 571-1000 C: 1-778-694-9914 E: shchub@secwepemchealth.ca
Shannon Girling-Hebert	Ktunaxa	P: 250.427.5879, E: SGirling-Hebert@ktunaxa.org
Leo Porter	St'at'imc	P:250-256-7530 E: lporter@statimchealth.net