

# Being Respectful to Coworkers Meeting Kit

## WHAT'S AT STAKE

No matter what your job title is or what you are tasked to do at work, everyone should share a common goal to be respectful to one another.

## WHAT' S THE DANGER

- **Raising Your Voice:** While it is understandable that at times, you may raise your voice if you are excited or angry, it is important to minimize the amount of yelling you do each day. Yelling and raising your voice while utilizing a negative tone can ward off the connection between you and other coworkers.
- **Berating Other Coworkers:** Never berate or call another employee a derogative name, even if you were called a name or yelled at beforehand. Calling another coworker or employee a name is one way to quickly stir the tensions within a workplace. Additionally, name calling can and may be considered workplace harassment, which can result in suspensions or terminations. Always maintain a positive tone and attitude while you are working, especially when you are working with other coworkers.
- **Being Overly-Critical:** Working with individuals who are overly-critical and who belittle others is never fun, and it sure is not motivating. Avoid putting other coworkers down, belittling their efforts, or even patronizing them as they attempt to get their job done each day.
- **Using Negative Body Language:** Humans communicate mostly through the use of their bodies, followed by the language that they speak. With our bodies, we have the ability to show our emotions within seconds, even without saying a word. While at work, be sure to avoid negative body language

such as extensively crossing your arms, sitting facing away from your coworkers, or even puckering your lips too tightly to dismiss a thought or comment a coworker has made.

## **HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF**

Respect, trust, and good communication go a long way in improving the safety at a worksite in a variety of ways.

1. Respect and good communication go hand in hand. When we feel comfortable going up to a coworker or bringing a problem to a supervisor, safety issues can be addressed quickly. In workplaces where there is a lack of respect many employees will adopt a mindset of “it is not my problem” when safety issues arise.
2. When we treat one another with respect, issues such as workplace violence are far less likely to occur. While many acts of violence in the workplace are committed by someone outside the company, many incidents occur between individuals within a workplace.
3. Employees who respect and trust one another can more easily focus on their work. When there is a lack of trust or respect, just seeing a coworkers that you view as negative can send your mind racing.

### **CREATE A CULTURE OF RESPECT**

#### **1. Offer a verbal compliment**

Try to give at least one verbal compliment a day. It could be to someone you see every day or even a stranger whose paths you cross only momentarily.

#### **2. Address someone by name**

It could be a co-worker you pass every day in the hall, the postal worker that delivers the mail or anyone else who you are trying to get the attention of. The act of recalling someone's name demonstrates to others that you care enough about them to make the effort to do so.

### **3. Give your undivided attention**

In our busy work culture, it is common to have our minds half focused on something else while simultaneously holding a conversation with someone. However, giving your undivided attention to someone is key to showing respect.

### **4. Show interest**

When people respond to the question of what makes them feel respected is if someone shows an interest in not just their work, but also their family. When someone shows an interest in the things that are important to us, it boosts our self-esteem and feelings of respect.

### **5. Be on time**

Demonstrate that you respect others' time and develop ways to ensure that you will be on time when you say you will.

### **6. Do what you say you will**

Until you start doing what you told yourself you'd do, you are not going to be able to keep your word to others either.

### **7. Seek someone else's opinion**

The next time you get stumped while working on a project, seek someone else's opinion. This shows that person that you value their expertise enough to confide in them when you need help.

### **8. Give credit where credit is due**

Every respectful leader knows how integral it is to give staff credit when good work is completed.

### **9. Recommend someone**

Recommend them for a promotion, project, award, or a new position. Recommending someone will help to form a bond of mutual respect.

### **10. Give public recognition**

The best kind of public recognition is often the unexpected praise

that a supervisor or colleague gives in front of others.

## **FINAL WORD**

Respect, good communication, and trust can be hard to fully quantify at times unlike certain safety statistics such as near misses or recordable injuries. A workforce that exhibits these positive attributes is more likely to enjoy being at work than their counterparts who work somewhere who do not experience the same type of work environment.

---

# **Being Respectful to Coworkers**

## **Stats and Facts**

### **FACTS**

Respect is a requisite for a healthy, professional workplace where employees feel valued performing work that is meaningful to their organization. A healthy work environment can increase employee retention and boost an organization's reputation as a great place to work.

When employees know they are respected by other team members, they are less stressed and more committed to their jobs. The same is true when an employee knows that upper management values and respects them and their work.

### **STATS**

Disrespect in the workplace has become more flagrant and commonplace over the last 20 years, according to a research involving 800 managers and employees in 17 different industries. "The Cost of Bad Behavior" report suggests more widespread repercussions. Of those on the receiving end of disrespectful

behavior, the research showed that:

- 78% said their commitment to the organization had declined.
- 66% said their job performance suffered.
- 47% said they intentionally spent less time at work. 38 percent said they deliberately decreased the quality of their work.
- 6% of employees rate empathy as important for companies to demonstrate.
- And it's not just big companies getting sued for not observing employee rights laws—a recent study found that small businesses in the U.S. pay up to \$133 billion a year for employee rights-related lawsuits.
- More than 50% of civil lawsuits filed every year in the country are against small businesses.
- Employees who felt their leaders treated them with respect were 63% more satisfied with their jobs, 55% more engaged, 58% more focused, and 110% more likely to stay with their organization.
- Only 21% of our survey respondents told us that their leaders model sustainable work practices.
- 32% of employees say they have to wait more than three months to receive feedback from their managers.

---

# Being Respectful to Coworkers Fatality Report

## Busted Water Line Leads to Crushed Co-Worker

While there is much disrespect among workers there are many pranks in the workplace that sometimes can be fun, they can also end up distracting workers to the point that major accidents and serious injuries can occur. Even the most innocent of activities can sometimes lead to unexpected injuries that may be serious enough

to cause death. As a result, workplace safety should always remain your number one priority.

In one recent incident, the operator of an excavator struck a water line while he was digging a trench, resulting in a spray of water. Another worker who was down in the trench then used his shovel to throw some of the water back at the excavator operator, who tried to shut his window in order to avoid the water. Instead, his shovel hit a lever that moved the bucket and crushed the worker into the wall of the trench. This is a good example of how a simple act of men throwing water at one another completely distracted both of them from the heavy and potentially dangerous machinery. In this case, that distraction was significant enough to cause a serious injury in the workplace.

---

## Being Respectful to Coworkers – Picture This



Look at the image above there is an upset boss nagging his employee inappropriately. As the boss, you can set the bar of good behavior by controlling upsets by letting minor irritations slide, not fester. Communicating in a polite and positive manner. Being mindful of not only what you say but how you say it. Ending disagreements with a friendly high-five or handshake to ensure that any harsh words have been put to rest. Encouraging employees to come to each other's aid – in other words, to act like a team, and not just say they are.

As the employee, you can respond by not reacting negatively towards the aggressive communication. Use respect and communicate effectively – not only can this help de-escalate a situation but can improve relations and show the boss you are capable of handling criticism.

---

# Being Respectful to Coworkers Meeting Kit – Spanish

## TENER RESPETO

Independientemente de cuál sea su cargo o de la tarea que tenga encomendada en el trabajo, todos deberían compartir el objetivo común de ser respetuosos con los demás.

## CUÁL ES EL PELIGRO

## PROTOCOLOS DE EVASIÓN

- Levantar la voz: Aunque es comprensible que a veces levante la voz si está emocionado o enfadado, es importante minimizar la cantidad de gritos que hace cada día. Gritar y levantar la voz utilizando un tono negativo puede alejar la conexión entre usted y otros compañeros de trabajo.

- Reprender a otros compañeros de trabajo: Nunca reprenda o llame a otro empleado con un nombre despectivo, incluso si le han llamado o gritado antes. Insultar a otro compañero o empleado es una forma de agitar rápidamente las tensiones en el lugar de trabajo. Además, insultar puede considerarse acoso laboral, lo que puede dar lugar a suspensiones o despidos. Mantenga siempre un tono y una actitud positiva mientras trabaja, especialmente cuando lo hace con otros compañeros.
- Ser demasiado crítico: Trabajar con personas que son demasiado críticas y que menosprecian a los demás nunca es divertido, y seguro que no es motivador. Evite menospreciar a otros compañeros de trabajo, menospreciar sus esfuerzos o incluso ser condescendiente con ellos cuando intentan hacer su trabajo cada día.
- Utilizar un lenguaje corporal negativo: Los seres humanos se comunican principalmente a través del uso de sus cuerpos, seguido por el lenguaje que hablan. Con nuestros cuerpos, tenemos la capacidad de mostrar nuestras emociones en segundos, incluso sin decir una palabra. Cuando esté en el trabajo, asegúrese de evitar el lenguaje corporal negativo, como cruzar los brazos de forma extensiva, sentarte de espaldas a sus compañeros o incluso fruncir los labios con demasiada fuerza para rechazar un pensamiento o comentario que haya hecho un compañero.

## **COMO PROTEGERSE**

### **RESPECTO Y SEGURIDAD EN EL TRABAJO**

El respeto, la confianza y la buena comunicación contribuyen en gran medida a mejorar la seguridad en el lugar de trabajo de diversas maneras.

1. El respeto y la buena comunicación van de la mano. Cuando los empleados se sienten cómodos dirigiéndose a un compañero de trabajo o planteando un problema a un supervisor, los problemas de seguridad pueden abordarse rápidamente. En los

lugares de trabajo en los que hay una falta de respeto, muchos empleados adoptarán la mentalidad de “no es mi problema” cuando surjan problemas de seguridad.

2. Cuando los empleados se tratan unos a otros con respeto, es mucho menos probable que se produzcan problemas como la violencia en el lugar de trabajo. Aunque muchos actos de violencia en el lugar de trabajo son cometidos por alguien ajeno a la empresa, muchos incidentes ocurren entre individuos dentro de un lugar de trabajo.
3. Los empleados que se respetan y confían entre sí pueden concentrarse más fácilmente en su trabajo. Cuando hay una falta de confianza o de respeto, el mero hecho de ver a un compañero de trabajo que considera negativo puede hacer que su mente se acelere.

## **CREAR UNA CULTURA DE RESPETO**

### **1. Ofrezca un cumplido verbal**

Intente hacer al menos un cumplido verbal al día. Puede ser a alguien que vea todos los días o incluso a un desconocido con al que se cruza sólo momentáneamente.

### **2. Diríjase a alguien por su nombre**

Puede tratarse de un compañero de trabajo con el que se cruza todos los días en el pasillo, del empleado de correos que le entrega la correspondencia o de cualquier otra persona a la que quiera llamar la atención. El hecho de recordar el nombre de alguien demuestra a los demás que le importa lo suficiente como para hacer el esfuerzo de hacerlo.

### **3. Preste toda su atención**

En nuestra ajetreada cultura laboral, es habitual tener la mente medio concentrada en otra cosa mientras se mantiene una conversación con alguien. Sin embargo, prestar toda su atención a alguien es la clave para mostrar respeto.

## **4. Muestre interés**

Cuando las personas responden a la pregunta de qué les hace sentirse respetadas es si alguien muestra interés no sólo por su trabajo, sino también por su familia. Cuando alguien muestra interés por las cosas que son importantes para nosotros, aumenta nuestra autoestima y los sentimientos de respeto.

## **5. Sea puntual**

Demuestra que respetas el tiempo de los demás y desarrolla formas de asegurar que llegará a tiempo cuando diga que lo hará.

## **6. Haga lo que dice que hará**

Hasta que no empiece a hacer lo que se ha dicho a usted mismo que haría, tampoco va a poder cumplir su palabra con los demás.

## **7. Busque la opinión de otra persona**

La próxima vez que se quede perplejo mientras trabajas en un proyecto, pida la opinión de otra persona. Esto demuestra a esa persona que valora su experiencia lo suficiente como para confiar en ella cuando necesita ayuda.

## **8. Reconozca el mérito cuando corresponda**

Todo líder respetuoso sabe que es fundamental dar crédito al personal cuando se realiza un buen trabajo.

## **9. Recomendar a alguien**

Recomiende a alguien para un ascenso, un proyecto, un premio o un nuevo puesto. Recomendar a alguien ayudará a formar un vínculo de respeto mutuo.

## 10. Dar un reconocimiento público

El mejor tipo de reconocimiento público suele ser el elogio inesperado que un supervisor o colega hace delante de los demás.

### CONCLUSIÓN

El respeto, la buena comunicación y la confianza pueden ser difíciles de cuantificar completamente a veces, a diferencia de ciertas estadísticas de seguridad como los casi accidentes o las lesiones registrables. Una plantilla que muestra estos atributos positivos tiene más probabilidades de disfrutar en el trabajo que sus homólogos que trabajan en un lugar que no experimenta el mismo tipo de entorno laboral.

---

## Being Respectful to Coworkers Stats and Facts – Spanish

### ESTADÍSTICAS Y HECHOS

#### HECHOS

El respeto es un requisito para un lugar de trabajo sano y profesional en el que los empleados se sientan valorados al realizar un trabajo significativo para su organización. Un entorno de trabajo saludable puede aumentar la retención de los empleados y mejorar la reputación de una organización como un gran lugar de trabajo.

Cuando los empleados saben que son respetados por los demás miembros del equipo, están menos estresados y más comprometidos con su trabajo. Lo mismo ocurre cuando un empleado sabe que la alta dirección le valora y respeta a él y a su trabajo.

# ESTADÍSTICAS

La falta de respeto en el lugar de trabajo se ha vuelto más flagrante y habitual en los últimos 20 años, según una investigación en la que participaron 800 directivos y empleados de 17 sectores diferentes. Como propietario de una pequeña empresa, tiene razón al suponer que el comportamiento descortés suele provocar un descenso de la productividad. Pero el informe “El coste del mal comportamiento” sugiere repercusiones más amplias. De los que se encuentran en el extremo receptor de un comportamiento irrespetuoso, la investigación mostró que

- El 78% dijo que su compromiso con la organización había disminuido.
  - El 66% dijo que su rendimiento laboral se vio afectado.
  - El 47% dijo que intencionadamente pasaba menos tiempo en el trabajo. El 38% dijo que había disminuido deliberadamente la calidad de su trabajo.
  - El 6% de los empleados considera que es importante que las empresas demuestren empatía.
  - Y no son sólo las grandes empresas las que son demandadas por no respetar las leyes de derechos de los empleados: un estudio reciente reveló que las pequeñas empresas de Estados Unidos pagan hasta 133.000 millones de dólares al año por demandas relacionadas con los derechos de los empleados.
  - Más del 50% de las demandas civiles presentadas cada año en el país son contra pequeñas empresas.
  - Los empleados que sentían que sus líderes les trataban con respeto estaban un 63% más satisfechos con sus trabajos, un 55% más comprometidos, un 58% más centrados y un 110% más propensos a permanecer en su organización.
  - Sólo el 21% de los encuestados nos dijo que sus líderes son un modelo de prácticas laborales sostenibles.
  - El 32% de los empleados dicen que tienen que esperar más de tres meses para recibir los comentarios de sus jefes.
-

# Being Respectful to Coworkers Fatality Report – Spanish

## La rotura de una tubería de agua provoca el aplastamiento de un compañero de trabajo

Aunque hay mucha falta de respeto entre los trabajadores, hay muchas bromas en el lugar de trabajo que a veces pueden ser divertidas, también pueden acabar distrayendo a los trabajadores hasta el punto de que pueden producirse accidentes importantes y lesiones graves. Incluso la más inocente de las actividades puede conducir a veces a lesiones inesperadas que pueden ser lo suficientemente graves como para causar la muerte. Por ello, la seguridad en el lugar de trabajo debe ser siempre su prioridad número uno.

En un incidente reciente, el operador de una excavadora golpeó una tubería de agua mientras cavaba una zanja, lo que provocó un chorro de agua. Otro trabajador que estaba en la zanja utilizó entonces su pala para lanzar parte del agua hacia el operador de la excavadora, que intentó cerrar su ventana para evitar el agua. En lugar de ello, su pala golpeó una palanca que movió la cuchara y aplastó al trabajador contra la pared de la zanja. Este es un buen ejemplo de cómo un simple acto de hombres que se lanzan agua unos a otros distrajo completamente a ambos de la maquinaria pesada y potencialmente peligrosa. En este caso, esa distracción fue lo suficientemente importante como para causar una lesión grave en el lugar de trabajo.

---

# Being Respectful to Coworkers – Picture This – Spanish



Mira la imagen de arriba, hay un jefe molesto regañando a su empleado de forma inapropiada. Como jefe, puedes poner el listón del buen comportamiento controlando los disgustos dejando que las irritaciones menores se deslicen, no que se agudicen. Comunicarse de forma educada y positiva. Ser consciente no sólo de lo que se dice sino de cómo se dice. Terminar los desacuerdos con un saludo amistoso o un apretón de manos para asegurarse de que las palabras duras han quedado atrás. Animar a los empleados a que se ayuden mutuamente, es decir, a que actúen como un equipo y no sólo digan que lo son.

---

# Wildfire Smoke 101 – Combined Wildfire Smoke and Heat

The wildfire season occurs between April and October each year and can coincide with periods of extreme heat. It is important to know how to protect your health when experiencing wildfire smoke and extreme heat together.

## People at risk

Some people may be more vulnerable to the health effects of heat and air pollution, such as wildfire smoke. Those who may be at greater risk of the effects of wildfire smoke and extreme heat include:

- seniors
- pregnant people
- infants and young children
- people who work outdoors
- people involved in strenuous outdoor exercise
- people with an existing illness or chronic health conditions, such as:
  - cancer
  - diabetes
  - mental illness
  - lung or heart conditions

## Symptoms of combined wildfire and heat exposure

### Mild Symptoms

Mild symptoms include:

- tears
- runny nose
- sore eyes and throat

If you have any of the mild symptoms, find a clean air space to cool off and take a break from the smoke.

## **Moderate Symptoms**

Moderate symptoms include:

- skin rash
- headache
- extreme thirst
- muscle cramps
- heavy sweating
- nausea or vomiting
- coughing or wheezing
- rapid breathing and heartbeat
- dark urine or decreased urination

If you have any of the moderate symptoms, move to a cool, smoke-free place and hydrate immediately. Water is best.

## **Severe Symptoms**

Severe symptoms include:

- chest pain
- difficulty breathing
- dizziness or fainting
- high body temperature
- confusion and lack of coordination
- no sweating, but very hot, red skin

If you have any of the severe symptoms, you may be having a heart attack, heat stroke or other medical emergency. Call 9-1-1 and seek immediate medical care. While waiting for help, try to cool down by moving to a cool place and apply cold water to large areas of your skin.

## **How to reduce your risk**

# Wildfire Emergency

If your community is threatened by an approaching wildfire, your local health or emergency authorities will provide direction. Be prepared to evacuate at any time. If told to evacuate, do so.

## **Keep windows and doors closed and stay cool**

During an air quality advisory, keep your windows and doors closed, and seal them properly with weather stripping.

Use your air conditioner. Be sure to turn on “recirculate” (instead of bringing in outdoor air) and to use a HEPA filter in your ventilation system. If you don’t have an air conditioner, it may not be safe to stay inside with doors and windows closed when it’s hot outside.

## **Find clean cool air**

To get a break from the heat and smoke, go to a community centre or other building that offers clean cool air if:

- the air quality is poor
- the temperature is increasing
- you do not have an air conditioner in your residence

Contact your local health or emergency authorities to find the most up-to-date information about publicly accessible clean, cool air shelters. Please be sure to respect the guidance on physical distancing from the local authorities in that area.

## **Limit outdoor and strenuous activity**

To reduce your exposure to wildfire smoke and extreme heat, you should limit the time you spend outdoors. Pay attention to air quality and weather forecasts and reschedule your outdoor activities for a time when conditions are better.

## **Stay hydrated**

Drink plenty of cool liquids, especially water, before you feel thirsty to decrease your risk of dehydration.

## **Care for others**

Watch out for those in your care who are vulnerable to wildfire smoke and heat. Frequently check in on neighbours, friends, and older family members, especially those who are chronically ill, to make sure that they are cool and hydrated.

## **Keep indoor air clean**

When indoors, minimize other sources of air pollution. For tips on improving indoor air quality, visit:

- Improve indoor air quality in your home
- Factsheet: Protecting your indoor air from outdoor pollutants

# **The Air Quality Health Index (AQHI) is here to help**

Check the AQHI for air quality conditions in your community and advice on how to reduce your exposure to air pollution. If poor air quality is due to the presence of wildfire smoke, visit the wildfire smoke and air quality web page for more information on how to protect your health.

*Source: © Copyright 1997-2021 CCOHS*

---

# **Wildfire Smoke 101 – How to Prepare For Wildfire Smoke**

## **About wildfire smoke events**

Communities across North America experience wildfire smoke events,

typically from April to October. Smoke may be carried hundreds or thousands of kilometres from the fire zone. It is difficult to predict:

- when fires will occur
- how big they will be
- how much smoke they will generate

If you live in an area at higher risk for wildfires, it's best to be prepared. You can develop plans and take actions to protect yourself and your family before wildfire season starts.

## **Checklist for wildfire smoke season preparedness**

- Are you or is someone in your family at risk for wildfire smoke health effects?
- Do you have an adequate supply of medications?
- Do you have an adequate supply of food and water?
- Do you have spare filters for the air filtration unit (a high efficiency heat ventilation air conditioning (HVAC) system or an air purifier) in your home?
- Do you know where you can go to take a break from the smoke?
- Do you know where to find information about local air quality conditions?
- Do you know the emergency number for your local health authority?

## **People at risk**

Some people may be more sensitive to the health effects of wildfire smoke exposure, including:

- seniors
- pregnant people
- infants and young children
- people who work outdoors
- people involved in strenuous outdoor exercise
- people with an existing illness or chronic health

conditions, such as:

- cancer
- diabetes
- mental illness
- lung or heart conditions

## Medical preparedness

If you, or members of your family, are in one or more of the at-risk groups and are in a region where air quality is impacted by wildfire smoke, be prepared by:

- speaking with a doctor or health care provider about developing a management plan for wildfire smoke events.
- maintaining a supply of necessary medications at home and always carrying these medications with you during wildfire season. Work with your health care provider to create a plan on what to do in case your medications are unable to stabilize your condition.

Consider these points to ensure you are prepared for a wildfire smoke event.

## Prepare your home

It's important that the air we breathe inside our home is clean because we spend a lot of time indoors. To ensure you have clean air in your home, you can prepare in advance by:

- learning how to use recirculation settings on your HVAC system to prevent smoke from entering your home
- purchasing a clean, good quality air filter (for example, HEPA filter) for your ventilation system
- ensuring you have at least one functioning carbon monoxide alarm in your home

Consider purchasing an air purifier that contains a HEPA filter. These devices can remove smoke from indoor air and those who are at risk will benefit most from using one in their home. There are many models available. It's best to do some research and find an air purifier that's appropriate for the size of the room you plan

to use it in.

Learn more about choosing an air purifier that is appropriate for your needs.

## **Find clean cool air**

If you can't maintain clean air inside your home during a wildfire smoke event, be aware of locations in your community where you can find clean air. Libraries, shopping malls and community centres typically have filters and air conditioning that make them safe places to take a break from the smoke. For more information, contact your local health or emergency authorities. Please be sure to respect the COVID guidance on physical distancing from the local authorities in that area.

## **Find reliable information about wildfire conditions**

There are a number of tools available to determine whether smoke is affecting your air quality. Know where to find these tools and information about your local air quality.

Consult the air quality health index (AQHI) and learn how to use the AQHI to check air quality conditions in your community.

Satellite imagery is another advanced tool used to track smoke movements.

If your community is threatened by an approaching wildfire, your local health or emergency authorities will provide direction. Be prepared to evacuate at any time. If told to evacuate, do so.

## **Spending time outdoors during a wildfire smoke event**

If you or members of your family spend time outdoors:

- learn how to check the local air quality conditions in your area to determine whether it is safe to be outdoors

- have a plan for limiting exposure to wildfire smoke if you will be caring for children or participating in any outdoor events
- review resources from your provincial or territorial workers compensation organization for guidance on how to work outside during wildfire season

*Source: © Copyright 1997-2021 CCOHS*

---

# **Wildfire Smoke 101 – Using an Air Purifier to Filter Wildfire Smoke**

Wildfire smoke can get inside your home through windows, doors, vents, air intakes and other openings. This can make your indoor air unhealthy. The fine particles in smoke can be a risk to health.

## **Who can benefit from using an air PURIFIER?**

Those who are most vulnerable to the health effects of wildfire smoke will benefit the most from using an air purifier in their home. People who are at a higher risk of health problems when exposed to wildfire smoke include:

- seniors
- pregnant people
- infants and young children
- people who work outdoors
- people involved in strenuous outdoor exercise

- people with an existing illness or chronic health conditions, such as:
  - cancer
  - diabetes
  - mental illness
  - lung or heart conditions

You can use an air purifier in a room where you spend a lot of time. This can help decrease the fine particles from wildfire smoke in that room.

Air purifiers are self-contained air filtration appliances that are designed to clean a single room. They remove particles from the room they are operating in by pulling the indoor air through a filter that traps the particles.

## Choosing an air purifier

There are many kinds of air purifier available and not all air purifiers perform the same to remove indoor smoke particulates. Currently, many effective air purifiers have a High Efficiency Particulate Air (HEPA) filter. If you have a respiratory condition, you should only consider purchasing HEPA portable filtration units, which are able to trap the smallest particles.

Look for a unit certified by the Association of Home Appliance Manufacturers (AHAM).

Choose one that is sized for the room in which you will use it. The AHAM label indicates the square footage of the area that each unit can clean and includes the clean air delivery rate (CADR) for three categories: tobacco smoke, dust and pollen. The CADR describes how well the machine reduces tobacco smoke, dust and pollen. The higher the number, the more particles the air purifier can remove.

Wildfire smoke is most similar to tobacco smoke so use the tobacco smoke CADR as a guide when selecting an air purifier. For wildfire smoke, look for an air purifier with the highest tobacco smoke CADR that fits within your budget.

You can calculate the minimum CADR required for a room. As a general guideline, the CADR of your air purifier should be equal to at least two-thirds of the room's area. For example, a room with the dimensions of 10 feet by 12 feet has an area of 120 square feet. It would be best to have an air purifier with a smoke CADR of at least 80. Using an air purifier with a higher CADR in that room will simply clean the air more often and faster. If your ceilings are higher than 8 feet, an air purifier rated for a larger room will be necessary.

You can find a list of certified air purifiers on the:

- AHAM website
  - air purifiers listed on the AHAM website are certified for energy and performance
- Cal Air Resources Board (CARB) website
  - air purifiers listed on the CARB website are certified for electrical safety and ozone emissions

Online customer reviews can sometimes provide useful information about effectiveness, reliability and noise levels.

Avoid air purifiers and furnace/HVAC air purifiers that produce ozone, such as electrostatic precipitators and ionizers, as ozone can impact your health. Ozone generators and air purifiers that use UV light or photocatalytic oxidation also produce ozone and are not effective at removing harmful particles from the air.

## **Getting the most out of your air purifier**

To get the most out of your portable air purifier:

- keep your doors and windows closed
- operate your air purifier in a room where you spend a lot of time
- operate at the highest setting. Operating at a lower setting may reduce the noise of the unit but it will reduce its effectiveness.

- ensure that your air purifier is sized appropriately for the largest room you will be using it in
- place the air purifier in a location where air flow will not be obstructed by walls, furniture or other objects in the room
- position the air purifier to avoid blowing directly at or between people in the room
- maintain your air purifier by cleaning or replacing the filter as needed
- reduce sources of indoor air pollution, such as smoking, vacuuming, burning incense or candles, using wood stoves and using cleaning products that can emit high levels of volatile organic compounds.

If you have an HVAC system, you can help remove fine particles from your indoor air by:

- installing a high-quality air filter
- running your furnace fan often to filter the air

*Source: © Copyright 1997-2021 CCOHS*

---

# **Wildfire Smoke 101 – Wildfire Smoke and Your Health**

## **Wildfire smoke and pollution levels**

Wildfires can significantly increase air pollution levels. Wildfire smoke is a complex mixture of gases, particles, and water vapour that contains:

- ozone
- sulphur dioxide
- nitrogen dioxide

- carbon monoxide
- volatile organic compounds
- fine particulate matter (PM2.5)

These pollutants can harm your health, with PM2.5 posing the greatest risk.

There is no evidence of a safe level of exposure for most of these pollutants. This means that smoke can impact your health even at very low levels. As smoke levels increase, your health risks increase. Air quality may be decreased even if you can't see or smell smoke.

## Symptoms of smoke exposure

Milder and more common symptoms of smoke exposure include:

- headaches
- a mild cough
- a runny nose
- production of phlegm
- eye, nose and throat irritation

These symptoms can typically be managed without medical intervention.

More serious symptoms include:

- dizziness
- chest pains
- severe cough or shortness of breath
- wheezing (including asthma attacks)
- heart palpitations (irregular heartbeat)

If you have any of these symptoms, talk to a health care provider or seek urgent medical attention. Less commonly, exposure to wildfire smoke can lead to heart attack, stroke and even premature death. If you think you are having a medical emergency, dial 911 and seek immediate medical assistance.

Some people are at a higher risk of health problems when exposed

to wildfire smoke including:

- seniors
- pregnant people
- infants and young children
- people who work outdoors
- people involved in strenuous outdoor exercise
- people with an existing illness or chronic health conditions, such as:
  - cancer
  - diabetes
  - mental illness
  - lung or heart conditions

## **Reduce your exposure to wildfire smoke**

The best way to protect your health is to reduce your exposure to wildfire smoke.

### **General**

- Pay attention to the Air Quality Health Index (AQHI), special air quality statements or other indicators of smoke levels in your community. If necessary, limit outdoor activity and strenuous physical activities. If you have difficulty breathing, stop altogether.
- If you need to work outdoors, check with your provincial or territorial occupational health and safety organization or your local health authority. They can provide guidance on how to work safely outdoors during wildfire smoke events.

### **Indoors and at home**

- Keep windows and doors closed as long as the temperature is comfortable.
- Use recirculation settings on your HVAC system to prevent smoke from entering your home.
- Use a clean, good quality air filter (for example, HEPA) in

your ventilation system.

- Use an air purifier that uses HEPA filtration to remove smoke from your home. For more information on selecting an air purifier that is appropriate for your needs, refer to the “Using an air purifier to filter wildfire smoke” factsheet.
- Visit community centres, libraries, and shopping malls. These places often have cleaner filtered air and can provide a break from the smoke.
- Please be sure to respect the guidance on physical distancing from your local authorities.
- Keep vehicle windows closed and set the ventilation system to recirculate.

## **Other recommendations to protect your health**

Drink plenty of water to help your body cope with the smoke. Check on others who are in your care or live nearby who may be more vulnerable to smoke.

Avoid vacuuming and burning candles, incense or other materials.

### **If smoke is present for more than a few days:**

- stay active when you can. Try finding a place with clean air to exercise indoors, for instance at the gym, the community centre or at home. Consult the AQHI to look for breaks in the smoke to find opportunities to go outdoors.
- don't forget to take care of your mental health. It's not unusual to feel anxious, stressed out, sad or isolated during a smoke event. Eating well, getting enough sleep, exercising and staying in contact with friends can help. Anyone who is having trouble coping with symptoms of stress, anxiety or depression should seek help from a health care provider.

---

# Wildfire Smoke and Your Health

Wildfire season typically runs from early April to late October. As wildfire burns through forests and grasslands, it produces dense smoke that can be a major source of toxic air pollutants. This pollution contains fine particles (that are not visible to the human eye) that penetrate deep into our lungs and bloodstream, sometimes leading to serious health effects. Those at greater risk of these effects are:

- small children
- pregnant women
- elderly
- people with lung or heart conditions
- people involved in strenuous outdoor work or sports

**During heavy smoke conditions, everyone at risk regardless of their age or health.**

## Symptoms of smoke exposure

Milder and more common symptoms of smoke exposure include:

- sore and watery eyes
- runny nose and sinus irritation
- scratchy throat and mild coughing
- headache

The following symptoms are less common, but are more serious:

- shortness of breath
- wheezing (including asthma attacks)
- severe cough
- dizziness
- chest pains
- heart palpitations

If you experience any of these more severe symptoms, talk to a health professional, or seek urgent medical attention. If you think you could be having a heart attack, a stroke or another medical emergency, dial 911 and seek immediate medical assistance.

## Protect your health during a wildfire

- **Limit outdoor activity** and strenuous physical activities as much as possible. If you have difficulty breathing, reduce your activities or stop altogether. During prolonged smoke exposure, it's important to stay active when you can. Pay attention to the Air Quality Health Index (AQHI) or other indicators of smoke levels in your community and watch for opportunities to get outside and be active if conditions improve.
- **Drink lots of water** to help your body cope with the smoke.
- At home:
  - Reduce sources of indoor air pollution. Sources include:
    - smoking
    - vacuuming, unless your vacuum cleaner is equipped with a high efficiency particulate air (HEPA) filter (settled dust can be removed by wiping and wet mopping during a wildfire event).
    - burning incense and candles.
    - using wood stoves (consider choosing a low emission stove).
    - using cleaning products that can emit high levels of volatile organic compounds (VOCs) improperly.
  - Prevent infiltration of outside air, by:
    - properly sealing windows and doors and keeping them closed.
    - installing a high-quality air filter to remove particulate matter from the incoming air, in homes with forced air ventilation.
    - setting the HVAC system to recirculation mode.
    - limiting the use of exhaust fans, when not cooking.
  - Other strategies include:
    - using portable HEPA filters, which may reduce indoor

particulate levels. The frequency of filter changes and/or replacements depends on use and conditions. Look for certified air cleaners when possible.

- having air conditioning and humidification/dehumidification capabilities present (try to maintain humidity levels between 35 and 50%).
- installing and maintaining at least one CO alarm in the home.
- learn more tips on improving indoor air quality.
- **Keep vehicle windows closed** and set the ventilation system to recirculate.
- **Check in on others** who are in your care or live nearby who may be more vulnerable to smoke. Please respect the guidance on physical distancing from your local authorities.
- **If possible, leave the area:** If you are vulnerable to the health effects of wildfire smoke and smoke levels in your community are high, evaluate whether or not it is possible to temporarily re-locate to an area with cleaner air. Please be sure to respect the guidance on physical distancing from the local authorities in that area.
- **It is important to take care of your mental health** during a wildfire smoke event. It's not unusual to feel anxious, stressed out, sad or isolated during a smoke event. Eating well, getting enough sleep, exercising indoors and staying in contact with friends can help. Please be sure to respect the guidance on physical distancing from the local authorities in that area. Anyone who is having trouble coping with symptoms of stress, anxiety or depression should seek help from a health professional. Remember: a smoke event may last a long time, but it will eventually end. Sharing positive outlooks and attitudes will help you get through it.
- **Consult your physician** or local health authority for additional advice. Most provinces and territories also offer health advice remotely.

# Staying cool during a smoke and heat event

Most wildfires burn during the summer and the most intense fires often occur when the weather is the hottest. This means that people may at times be exposed to both smoke and extreme heat, both of which may be harmful to health.

If you do not have air conditioning at home and it is hot outside, it may not be safe to keep doors and windows closed. If you are vulnerable to the health effects of smoke and/or heat and you cannot keep your home cool and relatively smoke-free, find out if there are options available to you through your local authorities, such as a safe facility in the community where you can find cleaner, cooler air.

If you cannot spend time in cooler and cleaner air, try these three protective measures:

- Drink lots of water, even if you do not feel thirsty.
- Stay out of the sun, take cool showers, spray yourself with a water bottle, or wear an article of damp clothing to cool your body.
- Take it easy, and limit exercise and exertion that makes you sweat or breathe hard.

*Source: © Copyright 1997-2021 CCOHS*

---

## Chainsaw Meeting Guide

Download this Chainsaw Meeting Guide to identify the Hazards, Examples and Safe Work Practices associated with Chainsaw Use.

---

# **Chainsaw Meeting Guide – Spanish**

Download this Chainsaw Meeting Guide to identify the Hazards, Examples and Safe Work Practices associated with Chainsaw Use.

---

## **Landscape Maintenance Examples**

Download these Landscape Maintenance Examples containing actual accidents sourced from the OSHA accident search page and ICW Group claims data.

---

## **Landscape Maintenance Examples – Spanish**

Download these Landscape Maintenance Examples containing actual accidents sourced from the OSHA accident search page and ICW Group claims data.

---

# **Landscape Maintenance Slip Trip Fall Prevention Safety Meeting Guide**

Download this Safety Meeting Guide for Slips Trips and Falls while performing Landscape Maintenance.

---

# **Landscape Maintenance Slip Trip Fall Prevention Safety Meeting Guide – Spanish**

Download this Safety Meeting Guide for Slips Trips and Falls while performing Landscape Maintenance.

---

# **Orchard Ladder Safety Meeting Guide**

Download this Orchard Ladder Safety Meeting Guide to identify hazards and the potential to fall from a height as well as safe working practices.

---

# **Orchard Ladder Safety Meeting Guide – SPANISH**

Download this Orchard Ladder Safety Meeting Guide to identify hazards and the potential to fall from a height as well as safe working practices.

---

## **Powered Edger Safety Meeting Guide**

Download this Powered Edger Safety Meeting Guide to identify hazards and safe working practices regarding powered edgers.

---

## **Powered Edger Safety Meeting Guide – Spanish**

Download this Powered Edger Safety Meeting Guide to identify hazards and safe working practices regarding powered edgers.

---

## **Powered Hedge Trimmer Safety**

# Meeting Guide

Download this Powered Hedge Trimmer Safety Meeting Guide to identify hazards and safe working practices regarding powered hedge trimmers including the potential for contact with moving or hot parts; flying debris; high noise levels.

---

## Powered Hedge Trimmer Safety Meeting Guide – Spanish

Download this Powered Hedge Trimmer Safety Meeting Guide to identify hazards and safe working practices regarding powered hedge trimmers including the potential for contact with moving or hot parts; flying debris; high noise levels.