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OFFICIALS REMIND RESIDENTS OF HEALTH RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH WILDFIRE SMOKE



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Naples, Fla.— The Florida Department of Health in Collier County (DOH-Collier) cautions residents about the health effects of wildfire smoke as a respiratory irritant. Wildfire smoke can cause scratchy throat, coughing, headaches and/or irritated eyes and nose. Smoke can also worsen asthma, and chronic lung or heart conditions. Dust generated from increased wildfire response activity on dirt roads may also worsen these conditions.

How to protect your family from smoke:

- Pay attention to news coverage or health warnings related to smoke.
- Avoid prolonged outdoor activities. This is especially important for children and persons with pre-existing medical conditions.
- Stay indoors and run your air conditioner, if you have one. Keep the fresh air intake closed and the filter clean to prevent bringing additional smoke inside. For best results, run the air conditioning with recirculated air.

If you do not have an air conditioner, staying inside with the windows closed may be dangerous in extremely hot weather. In these cases, seek alternative shelter.

- Help keep particle levels lower inside. When smoke levels are high, try to avoid using anything that burns, such as wood fireplaces, gas logs, gas stoves and candles. Do not vacuum, which stirs up particles already inside your home. Do not smoke.
- Follow your doctor's advice about taking medicines and following your asthma management plan if you have asthma or other lung disease. Call your doctor if your symptoms worsen.

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