



WORKERS' COMPENSATION MANAGEMENT BUREAU

MONTANA DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATION

September 1, 2023

September 2023 Safety Tip

Wildfire Smoke and Employee Health

Agencies need to be aware that wildfire smoke may adversely impact the health of their employees and need to be prepared to take action to limit exposure.

Implementing safety measures to account for poor air quality leads to a healthier workforce and fewer workers' compensation claims.



Tips for Keeping Employees Healthy During Poor Air Quality

- **Workplace Controls** - Consider changing work schedules and/or work location, reducing levels of strenuous physical activity, and requiring frequent breaks.
- **Reduce Exposure** - Implement controls to reduce exposure to poor air quality, such as providing enclosed structures or vehicles where the air is filtered for employees to work or take breaks in.
- **Hydration** - Wildfire smoke can contribute to the effects of heat stress. Provide cool drinking water on the work site and encourage employees working outdoors to drink water every 15 to 20 minutes even if they aren't feeling thirsty.
- **Communication** - Implement a system for communicating about the health risks of wildfire smoke exposure in an easy to understand manner. Create a supportive environment for employees to express health concerns and, if applicable, encourage them to talk to a health care professional.

Resources

- Check the Air Quality In Your Area at todaysair.mt.gov
- CDC Guidance for [Outdoor Workers Being Exposed to Wildfire Smoke](#)

WCMB is here to help you and your team establish safety precautions for poor air quality days! Contact us at WCMB@mt.gov.

WORKERS' COMPENSATION MANAGEMENT BUREAU

MONTANA DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATION

(800) 287-8266 | TTY (406) 444-1421 | WCMB@mt.gov
100 N. Park Ave. Suite 320 | PO Box 200130 | Helena, MT 59620-0130

Non-Discrimination Notice: The State of Montana Benefit Plan complies with applicable Federal civil rights laws, state and local laws, rules, policies and executive orders and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, pregnancy, childbirth or medical conditions related to pregnancy or childbirth, political or religious affiliation or ideas, culture, creed, social origin or condition, genetic information, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, national origin, ancestry, age, disability, military service or veteran status or marital status. 45 C.F.R. § 92.8(b)(1) and (d)(1)

ATENCIÓN: si habla español, tiene a su disposición servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística. Llame al 1-866-270-3877 (TTY: 711).
ACHTUNG: Wenn Sie Deutsch sprechen, stehen Ihnen kostenlos sprachliche Hilfsdienstleistungen zur Verfügung. Rufnummer: 1-866-270-3877 (TTY: 711).