

SAFETY MESSAGE AIR QUALITY

LOS ANGELES WILDFIRES / January 2025

Please refer to the following ideas for staying safe during bad air quality periods.

1. MONITOR LOCAL AIR QUALITY

- **Use Local Resources:** For real-time updates specific to Los Angeles, check the **South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD)** website or apps like AirNow.
- **Follow Alerts:** For localized information, sign up for emergency alerts from the **City of Los Angeles** or **MySafe:LA**.

2. LIMIT YOUR OUTDOOR EXPOSURE

- **Stay Indoors:** Avoid outdoor activities, especially strenuous exercise, until air quality improves.
- **Plan Errands Wisely:** Schedule necessary outdoor tasks for early mornings or evenings when air quality might be better.

3. SEAL AND PROTECT YOUR HOME

- **Close All Openings:** Keep windows, doors, and vents shut to prevent smoke from entering.
- **Air Purifiers:** Use HEPA filters to remove fine particulate matter (PM2.5) from indoor air. If you don't own one, consider DIY options (e.g., attaching a HEPA filter to a box fan).
- **Inspect HVAC Systems:** Use filters rated **MERV-13 or higher** for HVAC systems and set to recirculation mode to avoid drawing in smoky air.

4. PROTECT YOUR RESPIRATORY HEALTH

- **Use Masks:** Wear an **N95 or P100 respirator** outdoors to protect against fine particles in wildfire smoke. Avoid cloth or surgical masks, which are ineffective for smoke.
- **Limit Breathing Irritants:**
 - Avoid burning candles, using fireplaces, or cooking with high heat, as these can worsen indoor air quality.

5. SAFELY HANDLE ASH

- **Wear Protective Gear:** When cleaning ash, use gloves, goggles, and a mask (N95 or better) to prevent contact and inhalation.
- **Wet Down Ash:** Use water to dampen ash before sweeping or scooping it up.
- Avoid dry sweeping or using leaf blowers, as these can resuspend harmful particles.
- **Dispose Properly:** Place ash in sealed bags and follow **Los Angeles Sanitation (LASAN)** guidelines for disposal.

6. TAKE CARE OF YOUR HEALTH

- **Stay Hydrated:** Drink plenty of water to flush out toxins and keep mucous membranes moist.
- **Medications:** Keep asthma inhalers, allergy medications, or other necessary prescriptions easily accessible.
- **Seek Medical Attention:** If you experience difficulty breathing, persistent coughing, or chest pain, consult a healthcare provider immediately.

7. PROTECT PETS

- **Indoors for Pets:** Keep pets inside as much as possible, especially during peak smoke.
- **Fresh Water:** Ensure pets have access to clean, fresh water.
- **Outdoor Time:** Limit outdoor animal activities and avoid areas with visible ash.

8. CONSIDER LONG-TERM RESILIENCE

- **Landscaping:** Replace flammable plants with fire-resistant landscaping to reduce future wildfire risks.
- **Ventilation Upgrades:** Invest in modern HVAC systems with enhanced filtration.
- **Emergency Kits:** Update your emergency supplies, including masks, portable air filters, and other wildfire-specific items.



Your LAFD: www.lafd.org
MySafe:LA: www.wildfirela.org