

# **Important Health Information**

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**ISSUING AGENCY:** Texas Departments of  
State Health Service  
Health Services Region  
Seven (HSR-7)

**DATE:** September 06, 2011

**TIME:** 4:00PM CST

**CONTACT:** HSR-7

Gene Mikeska

254-778-6744

Wildfires in Central Texas continue to put smoke into the atmosphere throughout Central Texas. Inhaling the smoke can cause eye, throat and nose irritation, coughing and difficulty breathing. People who are at the greatest risk of experiencing symptoms due to smoke exposure include: those with chronic lung disease (such as asthma or COPD) and / or heart disease, young children, pregnant women and older adults. Even healthy adults can be affected by the smoke so seek medical help if you experience increasing symptoms. Seek medical help immediately if you experience severe symptoms such as tightness in your chest, difficulty breathing, palpitations, nausea, or unusual fatigue or lightheadedness.

If you smell or see smoke, take some steps to protect your health:

- Find out if you should evacuate the area.
- Limit your activities outdoors, especially exercise or exhausting work.
- Stay indoors with the windows and doors closed.
- If you have a chronic lung disease (like asthma or COPD ) or heart disease, closely monitor your health and contact your doctor immediately if you have symptoms that worsen including repeated coughing, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, wheezing, chest tightness or pain, palpitations, nausea, unusual fatigue or lightheadedness.

If you do not have air conditioning, take additional steps to protect yourself and your family from heat exhaustion, which can be especially dangerous for infants, children, the elderly and people with chronic diseases.

- Consider moving to a location with air conditioning
- Lower body temperature by using cold compresses, misting or with a cool shower.
- Drink plenty of fluids. Don't wait until you are thirsty to drink; unless otherwise directed by your doctor or unless you to limit your fluid intake or if you are on water pills.
- Avoid drinks with alcohol or large amounts of sugar as these can promote dehydration.
- Wear light-weight and light colored clothing.
- Watch for signs of heat exhaustion such as fatigue, nausea, headaches and vomiting. Children and the elderly are especially at risk, contact your doctor or EMS if necessary.

**Keep informed about fires near you; contact your local authorities for more information.**