

**ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION
Division of Air Quality**

SITUATION REPORT

**AIR QUALITY ADVISORY
South Central AK #2009-04r**

LOCATION(S) IMPACTED: Copper River Basin, NE and SE Prince William Sound, Western Prince William Sound, Western Kenai Peninsula, Anchorage Bowl, Matanuska-Susitna Valley.

TIME/DATE OF UPDATE: Wednesday, July 8, 11:30 AM, *revised 5:00PM.*

VALID TIME: Valid July 8 at 11:30 AM until July 9 at 5:00 PM.

TIME/DATE OF THE NEXT REPORT: Thursday, July 9, 5:00 PM.

ADVISORY: Several fires across the State are impacting air quality for most of South Central Alaska.

Fire activity for the Chakina Fire in the Copper River Basin has decreased slightly, but continues to produce smoke that is drifting as far south as Valdez and Seward. Winds are expected to remain light and variable for this part of South Central, which will keep smoke in the area through Thursday. Overall air quality around this region will be **good to moderate**, with some areas experiencing periods that are **unhealthy for sensitive individuals**.

The Shanta Creek Fire southeast of Soldotna has increased in intensity, and is producing smoke that is impacting the northern Kenai Peninsula and the Anchorage Bowl. Fires north of Denali National Park continue to increase in size, and are causing smoke to drift into the Matanuska-Susitna Valleys. For Wednesday evening, overall air quality for the region will be **good to moderate**, with some areas experiencing periods that are **unhealthy for sensitive individuals**. Winds will be light and begin to increase from the west this evening and into Thursday, which may help improve the air quality for the area.

The forecast for South Central Alaska for Wednesday evening is for partly cloudy skies and isolated showers and thunderstorms near the mountains. High pressure is keeping winds light throughout South Central, so local wind flow patterns will affect smoke dispersion and the area for the greatest impact from these fires.

Keep in mind that areas immediately downwind of any fire will experience **hazardous** levels of smoke. Generally, worse conditions occur overnight and during the early morning hours, as the atmosphere cools and brings smoke to the surface. During the day, surface heating will mix smoke and carry it upwards, temporarily improving air quality. Alternatively, hot, dry weather may lead to extensive fire activity, dramatically increasing smoke production, and thus causing the worst visibilities to occur in the late afternoon

and early evening hours. This is what has been observed over much of the past week throughout the State, as high pressure has dominated the weather pattern.

The Municipality of Anchorage's Air Quality Program has also issued an air quality advisory. Air quality updates for the Municipality of Anchorage are available at 343-4899.

SMOKE AND PUBLIC IMPACT: This is an area forecast, and as such is a general forecast for portions of Interior Alaska. Smoke intensity will vary depending on precise location and local wind flow patterns. Smoke concentrations will be such that they could impact public health at times. It is advised that travelers check local weather as smoke conditions may vary considerably from one locality to the next. The most recent weather observations may be found on National Weather Service's homepage at <http://pafc.arh.noaa.gov/obs.php>.

CURRENT BURN RESTRICTIONS: None.

DEC advises anyone with respiratory illness or heart disease, the elderly, and children to avoid exposure to smoke. All others are cautioned to avoid outdoor activities or physical exertion when conditions reach unhealthy levels, as defined below:

The following table is the Air Quality Index for Particle Pollution.

| Index Values | Levels of Health Concern | Cautionary Statements |
|--------------|--------------------------------|--|
| 0-50 | Good | None |
| 51-100 | Moderate | Unusually sensitive people should consider reducing prolonged or heavy exertion. |
| 101-150 | Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups | People with heart or lung disease, the elderly and children should reduce prolonged or heavy exertion. |
| 151-200 | Unhealthy | People with respiratory or heart disease, the elderly and children should avoid prolonged exertion; everyone else should limit prolonged exertion. |
| 201-300 | Very Unhealthy | People with respiratory or heart disease, the elderly and children should avoid any outdoor activity; everyone else should avoid prolonged exertion. |
| Over 300 | Hazardous | Everyone should avoid any outdoor exertion; people with respiratory or heart disease, the elderly and children should remain indoors. |

When air quality data is unavailable, the following **Air Quality Smoke Reference Guide** may be used to estimate air quality levels and potential health impacts:

| Visibility | Air Quality |
|-------------------|--------------------------------|
| 10+ miles | Good |
| 6 - 9 miles | Moderate |
| 3 - 5 miles | Unhealthy for sensitive groups |
| 1.5 - 2.5 miles | Unhealthy |
| 0.9 - 1.4 miles | Very Unhealthy |
| 0.8 miles or less | Hazardous |

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

For information on Wildfire Smoke from the Department of Health and Social Services, visit their website at <http://www.epi.alaska.gov/eh/wildfire/default.htm>.

For information on Wildfire Smoke from the Department of Environmental Conservation, Air Quality Division, visit the website at <http://www.dec.state.ak.us/air/smokemain.htm>.

For information on road conditions around Alaska, visit the Road Traveler Information System at <http://511.alaska.gov/>.

For information on this advisory, contact Cindy Dettmer-Shea with the Division of Air Quality, at 907-269-7676.

NOTIFICATION LIST:

Copper River Basin (141)

Glennallen
Gulkana
Gakona
Eureka
McCarthy
Paxson
Slana
Nabesna
Chisana
Copper Center
Tazlina
Tonsina
Tolsona
Silver Springs
Nelchina
Mendeltna
Lake Louise
Kenny Lake
Chistochina
Chitina
Copperville

NE Prince William Sound (131)

Valdez
Thompson Pass

SE Prince William Sound (135)

Cordova
Eyak
Tatitlek

W Prince William Sound (125)

Whittier
Seward
Lowell Point
Girdwood
Moose Pass
Primrose
Crown Point
Chenega Bay

Susitna Valley (145)

Matanuska-Sustina Borough
Talkeetna
Willow
Cantwell

Point MacKenzie
Chase
Petersville
Susitna
Trapper Creek
Skwentna
Tyonek

Matanuska Valley (111)

Matanuska-Susitna Borough
Palmer
Buffalo-Soapstone
Butte
Wasilla
Houston
Sutton
Chickaloon
Big Lake
Miller Landing
Knik-Fairview
Glacier View
Knik River
Farm Loop
Lazy Mtn
Fishhook
Tanaina
Meadow Lakes
Lakes
Gateway

Anchorage Bowl (101)

Municipality of Anchorage
Anchorage
Bear Creek
Eagle River
Chugiak
Birchwood
Indian
Eklutna

Western Kenai Peninsula (121)

Kenai Peninsula Borough
Kenai
Soldotna
Sterling
Sunrise
Halibut Cove
Nikiski

Ninilchik
Kalifornsky
Kasilof
Kachemak
Funny River
Clam Gulch
Cooper Landing
Homer
Hope
Jakolof Bay
Cooper Landing
Anchor Point
Seldovia
Seldovia Village
Happy Valley
Salamatof
Ridgeway
Nanwalek
Port Graham
Nikolaevsk
Cohoe
Diamond Ridge
Fox River
Fritz Creek