

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

**SITUATION REPORT**

**AIR QUALITY ADVISORY  
Western Interior AK #2009-2**

**LOCATION(S) IMPACTED:** Chukchi Sea Coast, Kobuk Valley, Noatak Valley, Baldwin Peninsula and Selawik Valley, Seward Peninsula, Eastern Norton Sound and Nulato Hills, Koyukuk Valley, Yukon Valley, Upper Kuskokwim Valley .

**TIME/DATE OF UPDATE:** Wednesday, August 5, 12:30 PM.

**VALID TIME:** Valid August 5 at 12:30 PM until August 6 at 5:00 PM.

**TIME/DATE OF THE NEXT REPORT:** Thursday, August 6, 5:00 PM.

**ADVISORY:** Several large fires in Interior Alaska are affecting air quality across the State. Smoke in the Western Interior has been reported as far north as Kivalina, and as far west as Nome, with several observations across the region. Smoky conditions are expected to continue through Wednesday and may begin to clear out in most locations on Thursday as the winds shift to be from the west. Overall air quality for the Western Interior will be predominantly **good to moderate**, although some locations are approaching **very unhealthy** air quality.

The forecast for the Chukchi Sea Coast, and the Lower Kobuk and Noatak Valleys is for mostly cloudy skies and winds generally from the east on Wednesday. Clouds will hang around into Thursday, and the winds will shift to be more from the west/southwest. This may prevent the smoke from the Interior from reaching this area. For the Baldwin and Seward Peninsulas and the Selawik Valley, mostly cloudy skies are expected with winds shifting to be from the south this evening. Smoke will likely continue to reach this area until at least Thursday when winds from the southwest move into the area along with a chance for showers for the Seward Peninsula. For the rest of the Western Interior, light and variable winds on Wednesday will gradually become more from the south/southwest in the evening but remain light enough that smoke is still expected to reach the region through Thursday.

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.

**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>.

**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:**

**Baldwin Pen/Selawik Valley**

Northwest Arctic Borough

Kotzebue

Selawik

Noorvik

**North & Interior Seward Pen**

Buckland

Deering

Candle

Council

Haycock

Pilgrim Springs

Serpentine Hot Spgs

Taylor

**Southern Seward Peninsula**

Nome

White Mountain

Golovin

King Island

Koyuk

Solomon

**E Norton Sound/Nulato Hills (212)**

Unalakleet

Stebbins

St Michael

Elim

Koyuk

Shaktoolik

**Lower Koyukuk/Middle**

**Yukon Valleys**

Galena

Nulato

Huslia

Kaltag

Ruby

Koyukuk

**Upper Kobuk/Noatak Valley**

Northwest Arctic Borough

Ambler

Shungnak

Kobuk

**Upper Kuskokwim Valley**

McGrath

Takotna

Nikolai

Telida

**Chukchi Sea Coast**

Northwest Arctic Borough

Point Hope

Shishmaref

Kivalina

Espenberg

**Lower Kobuk/Noatak Valleys)**

Northwest Arctic Borough

Noatak

Kiana

Red Dog Mine