

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

**SITUATION REPORT**

**AIR QUALITY ADVISORY  
Western Interior AK #2009-3**

**LOCATION(S) IMPACTED:** Kobuk Valley and Noatak Valley.

**TIME/DATE OF UPDATE:** Thursday, August 6, 6:00 PM.

**VALID TIME:** Valid August 6 at 6:00 PM until August 10 at 12:00 PM.

**TIME/DATE OF THE NEXT REPORT:** Monday, August 10, 12:00 PM.

**ADVISORY:** Several large fires in Interior Alaska are affecting air quality across the State. Smoke is still present in the Western Interior and will continue into Friday. Overall air quality for the Western Interior will be predominantly **good to moderate**, although some locations are approaching **unhealthy** air quality.

The forecast for the Kobuk and Noatak Valleys is for mostly cloudy skies and isolated showers on Friday. Winds will be light and out of the northwest. For Saturday and Sunday, expect mostly cloudy skies, and winds from the north/northwest. This may prevent more smoke from moving into the region from the Interior.

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 are 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:**

**Upper Kobuk/Noatak Valley**  
Northwest Arctic Borough  
Ambler  
Shungnak

Kobuk  
**Lower Kobuk/Noatak Valleys)**  
Northwest Arctic Borough  
Noatak

Kiana  
Red Dog Mine