

Prepare for Fire Season

BEFORE A WILDFIRE

If you live in an area where the wildfire risk is high, take steps now to prepare for fire season. Being prepared for fire season is especially important for the health of children, older adults, and people with heart or lung disease.

If any family member has heart or lung disease, including asthma, check with your doctor about what you should do during smoke events. Have a plan to manage your condition.



Have a supply of N95 respirators and familiarize yourself with how to use them properly. They are widely available at home improvement stores, pharmacies, and online retailers.



Stock up so you won't need to go out when it's smoky. Ensure you have several days' worth of medications on hand. Avoid buying food that needs to be cooked, as cooking can contribute to indoor air pollution.



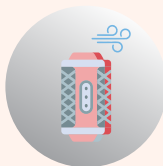
Organize your important items ahead of time, including financial and personal documents (such as birth certificates, social security cards, prescriptions, etc.). Know your evacuation routes and where to go if you have to evacuate. Make sure to prepare your children and consider your pets when making an evacuation plan.



Create a 'clean room' in your home. Choose a room with no fireplace and as few windows and doors as possible, such as a bedroom. Use a portable air cleaner in the room.



Buy a portable air cleaner before there is a smoke event. Make sure it has high-efficiency HEPA filters and is the right size for the room.



Make sure you're signed up for Warn Central Texas, air quality reports, public service announcements (PSAs), and follow social media updates that warn of high fire risk or active fires



Ask an air conditioning professional what kind of high-efficiency filters to use in your home's system and how to close the fresh-air intake if your central air system or room air conditioner has one.



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DURING A WILDFIRE

Follow instructions from local officials to keep yourself and your family safe by checking HSEM's website and the city's official social media page for updates.



Stay inside with the doors and windows closed. Run your air conditioner with the fresh-air intake closed ("recirculate mode") to keep smoke from getting indoors. Seek shelter elsewhere if you do not have an air conditioner and it is too warm to stay inside with the windows closed.



Follow your health care provider's advice if you have heart or lung disease, and follow your management plan if you have one. If your symptoms worsen, reduce your exposure to smoke and contact your provider.



Do not add to indoor air pollution. Do not burn candles or use gas, propane, wood-burning stoves, fireplaces, or aerosol sprays. Do not fry or broil meat, smoke tobacco products, or vacuum. All of these can increase air pollution indoors.



Use a portable air cleaner to reduce indoor air pollution. Follow the manufacturer's instructions on where to put the air cleaner and when to replace the filters.



Reduce how much smoke you inhale.

If it looks or smells smoky outside, avoid strenuous activities such as mowing the lawn or going for a run. Wait until air quality is better before you are active outdoors.



Pay attention to local air quality reports and health warnings,

which you can find on resources like warncentraltexas.org and [AirNow.gov](https://airnow.gov). Smoke levels can vary throughout the day, so you may have a chance to do errands or open windows when air quality improves. Public service announcements provide important updates, including changing conditions, canceled events, or evacuation notices.



Do not rely on dust masks or bandanas

for protection from smoke. An N95 respirator can protect you if it fits snugly to your face and is worn properly. These are not recommended for children.



Reduce smoke in your vehicle by closing the windows and vents and running the air conditioner in recirculate mode.

Slow down when you drive in smoky conditions.



FOR MORE INFORMATION:

