



MARK B HORTON, MD, MSPH
Director

State of California—Health and Human Services Agency
California Department of Public Health



ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER
Governor

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**USE OF N95 AND OTHER RESPIRATORS BY HEALTH CARE FACILITIES
LOCATED IN SMOKY AREAS**

Should hospitals, clinics, or long-term care facilities located in smoky areas consider putting N95 masks or other respirators on patients or staff to protect them from health effects associated with fire smoke?

- Facilities should keep indoor air as clean as possible by:
 - o Keeping windows and doors closed;
 - o Closing fresh air intakes and recirculating indoor air;
 - o Ensuring that air handling system filters are installed properly;
 - o Using air system filters with higher-efficiency filtration where possible;
 - o Using portable air cleaners (with HEPA filtration) adequately sized for rooms, if available;
 - o Not using ozone-generating equipment including air cleaners and ionizers;
 - o Minimizing indoor sources of air pollution (such as vacuuming or floor polishing).
- We do not advise putting N95 masks or other respirators on persons whose health status is compromised or who are elderly, because the increased resistance associated with breathing through a respirator may pose a health risk to the wearer.
- Use of N95 masks or other respirators by employees or other healthy persons may reduce exposure to particles in fire smoke if used properly and would not likely pose a health risk to wearers. However, how closely the respirator seals to the face will determine its effectiveness at reducing exposure. Without conducting a fit test, the level of protection for the individual wearer is unknown.