



MemberAlert



CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION OF HEALTH FACILITIES / 916.441.6400 / 916. 441-6441 (FAX)

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA FIRE ALERT

October 22, 2007, 1630 PST

The wildland fires in Southern California have impacted seven counties and have resulted in several long-term care facility and hospital evacuations.

CAHF staff are participating in daily briefings with the California Department of Public Health Emergency Preparedness Office and will be sharing recommendations with you as we get them.

Please notify Jocelyn Montgomery at jmontgomery@cahf.org if you have questions or your facility has been impacted by the fires. We will be sharing your reports and questions with the state emergency authorities.

In all widespread fire disasters, air quality is an immediate concern, especially for individuals who have respiratory or heart problems. CAHF has asked CDPH for specific recommendations regarding the use of masks and other methods to minimize the impacts of breathing smoke-filled air. We hope to have that information for distribution very soon.

In the meantime, here is some general advice from the Center for Disease Control on how to deal with wildfire smoke:

- Pay attention to local public health alerts on air quality.
- Stay indoors and keep doors and windows closed.
- Run an air conditioner with the fresh-air intake closed and make sure the filter is clean.
- Do not rely on dust masks or surgical masks for protection from smoke.

AN ADDITIONAL VERY IMPORTANT RECOMMENDATION:

If you are a facility that has had to evacuate or are a facility that has taking in evacuated residents, make sure that they are **ASSESSED FOR TRANSFER TRAUMA**. The conditions of an evacuation can seriously impact the health of frail elders and people with chronic illnesses, so **it is critical that they be evaluated as soon as possible during and after an evacuation for changes in their condition.**

If you are an impacted facility that needs disaster-related resources or information, call your local public health department for advice and/or referral to the proper agency. Also, please visit our Website at www.cahf.org/public/dpp for information related to this and other disasters.