



## Managing Buildings for Cleaner Air

During an extreme wildfire year we are all dealing with the effects of smoke in our lives. Several simple methods to manage homes or offices to minimize the concentration of inside smoke may help to improve your environment.

1. Limit the door entrance to the building – Select a primary building entrance that has a double door system and keep doors closed when not in use. Signs indicating to use the primary entrance should be placed at all other doors. Do not lock or block these entrances for safety reasons. Signs can be placed in such a manner that they would need to be removed to gain entrance.

2. Air conditioning systems – AC units should be set to recirculate indoor air to reduce smoke intake. Check your units to determine if they are capable of utilizing a medium or higher efficiency filter. Filters with a minimum efficiency reporting value (MERV) between 7 and 13 are effective at removing smoke particles and can be installed in many AC units. High Efficiency Particulate Air Filters (HEPA) are more expensive and might not be compatible with home AC systems.



3. Ozone Generators do not remove particles from the air and can cause respiratory irritations. These devices should not be used. These devices provide a negative charge to the particle which then sticks to positive charged surfaces like your walls.
4. Fans – These devices move air around the home or office to provide air circulation. Fans can be placed facing doors to create a pressure block for smoke entering the building. After the outside smoke clears, building takes several hours to change the air out so the fans can be faced in to help this.
5. Wear a N95 particulate mask indoors if these conditions exist:
  - Outdoor air quality is Very Unhealthy or Hazardous
  - You see smoke inside your building

6. Portable Air cleaners - Mechanical indoor air units remove particles by capturing them on filter materials that can be cleaned or replaced when needed. Please follow your specific manufacturer's recommendations for best performance. These units can be easily moved to areas of activity or work. The cleaners all have a fan to move air through the filters that can be noisy. Units with HEPA filters are more effective at



removing indoor smoke particles. Use room filters in the size room the device is rated for. Using it in a larger room will make the benefits considerably less.

7. Create a clean room to use for at risk people that has an appropriately sized cleaner in it. Most air filters are ok for bedroom sized rooms but not for multiple rooms at one time. Humidifiers do not work as air cleaners but they do help keep your nasal passages and throat hydrated.
8. Cleaning after or between smoke events – use products and methods that do not re-suspend particles into the air. Can use fan to move air out of house when ambient smoke decreases and is better outside than in. There is a delay period between when the outside air improves and the indoor air gets changed out. Use HEPA filtered vacuums and damp mopping and dusting.
9. Stay indoors – usually smoke will be less inside than outside. During times of extreme smoke this might be a degree of hazardous.
10. If you close up your house and it does not have AC watch the indoor temperatures and drink plenty of water to help prevent heat exhaustion or heat stroke
11. Reduce other forms of pollutants such as cigarette smoke, room fresheners, and spray (aerosol products, scented incense and vacuuming).
12. Clean room – choose room with few windows and doors on the side of the house or building away from direct sun, keep it cooler. Properly sized air cleaner, keep it cooled and comfortable if AC unit recirculates air, do not vacuum or dust during smoky times. Do not smoke, use candle or incense air fresheners for any type of aerosols.

If any of the suggestions mentioned here are not possible or ineffective leave the area to a place where smoke will not be a problem.