



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Media contact

[Seth Preston](#)

Mobile: 360-724-8766

Wildfire smoke impacts cause air quality burn ban in Whatcom, Skagit, Island counties

Outdoor burning, including campfires, prohibited until further notice

The [Northwest Clean Air Agency](#) is calling a Stage 2 air quality burn ban for Whatcom, Skagit, and Island counties because high levels of harmful wildfire smoke are forecast to severely impact local air quality for the next few days.

The ban will take effect at 9 a.m. Saturday (8/19) and continue into Monday at least.

No outdoor burning is allowed, including residential and agricultural burning, during a Stage 2 air quality burn ban. Home heating with fireplaces and uncertified wood stoves is also prohibited. This ban includes recreational fires like campfires and fire pits.

This air quality burn ban is separate from, and in addition to, fire safety burn bans already in effect because of increased fire danger in the three counties.

"The Northwest Clean Air Agency is calling an air quality burn ban in addition to the existing fire safety burn bans to further reduce smoke in our area and protect public health," said NWCAA Executive Director Mark Buford. "Once the air has cleared, we will remove the air quality burn ban. But the fire safety burn bans will remain in place until fire officials determine that fire danger has passed."

See Washington Department of Health information on protecting yourself and others during wildfire smoke events: <https://bit.ly/3sezvBD>.

Stage 2 fire safety burn bans, which also ban recreational fires, are already in place in the rural areas of the counties and some cities. Also, the Washington Department of Natural Resources ([DNR](#)) has issued [a recreational fire ban on state-protected lands](#).

Air quality bans are based on weather forecasts and current air pollution from small particles. Right now, air quality is predicted to be worse than the national health-based standard for at least 24 hours.

Burn ban violators could face fines and other enforcement actions.

NWCAA resources

- NWCAA's air monitors: <https://bit.ly/3IXahMq>
- Areawide smoke sensors: <https://bit.ly/3iWcwxM>
- NWCAA's Wildfire Smoke Information page: <https://bit.ly/2XoIMTN>

- NWCAA social media:
 - Twitter (@NWCleanAir)
 - NWCAA's Facebook page
 - Instagram (nwcleanair).

Other resources

- AirNow Fire and Smoke page: <https://fire.airnow.gov/>
- Washington Smoke Information blog: wasmoke.blogspot.com
- Statewide air quality monitoring: Washington Department of Ecology.
- Health questions? Contact your local health department:
 - Skagit County Health: 360-416-1500
 - Island County Health: 360-679-7350
 - Whatcom County Health: 360-778-6000

The Northwest Clean Air Agency is responsible for enforcing federal, state, and local air quality regulations in Island, Skagit, and Whatcom counties. In addition to permitting and regulating industrial sources of air pollution, the agency provides services and information related to asbestos, indoor air quality, outdoor burning, woodstoves, and fireplaces. More information about the agency is available at <https://nwcleanairwa.gov/>.