



Business Resiliency Workbook for Smoke Preparedness

Partners:

Ashland Chamber of Commerce
Ashland Fire & Rescue
Fire Learning Network – The Nature Conservancy
United States Forest Service
Asante Ashland Community Hospital

February 21, 2018

3 Steps to Smoke Preparedness

***How to be prepared for smoke impacts
to your business, employees and customers***

- 1. Assess your current situation**
 - 2. Take action to help minimize smoke impacts**
 - 3. Be ready with a communication plan during a smoke event**
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1. Assess your current situation

- Your building (business or home)**

- ✓ Determine how your current air filtration system works and what type of filters you are currently using (Recommended HEPA or MERV 13 or higher rated filter):

HVAC _____
Filters _____

- Your employees**

- ✓ Determine employee health sensitivities to smoke and work availability by those physically challenged during smoke events

EMPLOYEES AT RISK _____

- ✓ Estimate mask availability and use (Recommended N95 or N100)

- Your customers**

- ✓ Determine how your customers would be impacted by smoke and if there are other alternatives and options to access your business

2. Take action to help minimize smoke impacts

- Your building**

- ✓ Install new HVAC filters before fire season. Recommend HEPA or MERV 13 or higher. Stock up on filters for the season. Check filters periodically to see if they need to be changed. It is recommended checking the filter at least every 4 weeks during periods when your furnace or air conditioner is being used regularly. It may be necessary to change the filter in as little as 2 weeks. A clean filter will help your HVAC system run more efficiently. Change filters as needed and as they get dirty, and replace filters once the smoke has left the valley.

- ✓ Consider installing an air purifier as part of your HVAC system if it is appropriate. Contact a local HVAC specialist for a free business/home consultation.

- ✓ Purchase a **Portable Air Cleaner (PAC)**. Choose the most appropriate PAC for the size of your building. (visit: <https://thewirecutter.com/reviews/best-air-purifier/> for an in-depth consumer report). Prices range from \$90-\$540

Residential Air Purifier units can be purchased at **Ashland Hardware**, ranging in price from \$39.99-\$219.99

- ✓ Know how to seal off a room in case of the need to remain indoors. Install new weather stripping on your windows and doors where air tends to leak.
- ✓ Periodically check the air quality inside your building. Purchase or borrow (Ashland Fire & Rescue) a portable smoke measurement device (nephelometer)

- **Investment**

If you have a small amount to invest:

- ✓ Install MERV 13/HEPA filters in your HVAC System (\$15-\$100)
- ✓ Purchase a PAC that is appropriate for your building (\$125-\$600)
- ✓ Install new weather stripping

If you have more money to invest, including everything in the above list:

- ✓ Install an air purification system to your HVAC System (\$1200-\$1500 plus installation costs)
- ✓ Look into Air Curtains if your door stays open for long periods of time during smoke events (Costs depends on size of machine)

Additional Considerations:

- Depending on your business, using ovens, stoves and vacuum cleaners can make the indoor air quality worse. Ensure the employees working under these conditions have PACs and masks available.
- Window AC Units should not be used during smoke events. Cover and seal the sides of the unit to smoke does not leak in to your building.
- If your building does not have AC, consider running the HVAC system on "FAN" while having new MERV13 or better filters. If the building gets warm you may need fans to keep air flowing.

- **Your employees**

- ✓ Who are the key individuals to make decisions if the owner/manager is unavailable?:

- ✓ Make a list of employee personal contacts for all staff:

NAME _____
HOME PHONE _____ CELL _____
EMAIL _____

- ✓ Make a plan for how to conduct business if impacted by a smoke event in advance – for example:

Who can work remotely? _____

Who cannot come to work because of health impacts? _____

- ✓ Make sure each employee has a mask and knows how to use it
Recommended: N95 or N100

WHO PURCHASES: _____

COST _____

- ✓ Research what the various levels of smoke impacts mean to individual health concerns and activities (i.e. what individual actions should be taken at each levels?)

MEDICAL ADVICE: Personal Physician, Asante Ashland Community Hospital,
Jackson County Health & Human Services

- ✓ Devise a communication plan for your employees – how will you communicate with them?

By text By phone By email

- **Your customers**

- ✓ Create a plan for how you will do business in a smoke event

Can you operate from your location: Yes No

- ✓ Create a plan for how you will communicate with your customers during a smoke event at each of the levels – what methods of communication will you use? For example: website, phone message, signage, etc. as appropriate to type of business operation

3. Be ready with a communication plan during a smoke event

- **Implement communication plan**

- ✓ Measure internal air quality – secure necessary building plan
- ✓ Contact employees
- ✓ Contact customers
- ✓ Post video and predetermined communications on all available pathways (phone message, website, etc.)
- ✓ Where do I find important contacts?

The Ashland Chamber, in collaboration with Ashland Fire & Rescue, has created this workbook to help guide you in mitigating the challenges of smoke. The products recommended in this guide are examples of items that have gone through significant research. However, you need to make your own decisions based on your building capacity and budget. For the most up-to-date information & recommendations please visit:

ashlandchamber.com/Smoke • ashland.or.us/Smoke