

## **Air Quality Advisory Notice**

**September 8, 2020**

An Air Quality Advisory is in effect for the Fraser Valley Regional District due to high concentrations of **fine particulate matter** that are expected to persist through at least tonight. Smoke from wildfires burning in Washington, Oregon, and California moved over our region this morning and is now impacting ground-level fine particulate matter concentrations.

Smoke concentrations may vary widely across the region as winds and temperatures change, and as wildfire behaviour changes.

Fine particulate matter, also known as PM<sub>2.5</sub>, refers to airborne solid or liquid droplets with a diameter of 2.5 micrometres (µm) or less. PM<sub>2.5</sub> can easily penetrate indoors because of its small size.

Persons with chronic underlying medical conditions or acute infections such as COVID-19 should postpone or reduce outdoor physical activity until the advisory is lifted, especially if breathing feels uncomfortable. Exposure to PM<sub>2.5</sub> is particularly a concern for people with underlying conditions such as lung disease, heart disease, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), asthma, and/or diabetes, individuals with respiratory infections such as COVID-19, pregnant women and infants, children, and older adults. Individuals who are socially marginalized may also be at elevated risk.

As we are in the summer season with warm temperatures, it is also important to stay cool and hydrated. Indoor spaces with HEPA air cleaner filtration and air conditioning may offer relief from both heat and air pollution, but physical distancing guidelines for COVID-19 should still be observed. If you are experiencing symptoms such as chest discomfort, shortness of breath, coughing or wheezing, seek prompt medical attention. Call 9-1-1 in the case of an emergency.

Information about real-time air quality readings for Fraser Valley communities and potential health impacts can be found at [www.airmap.ca](http://www.airmap.ca) and <http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/epd/bcairquality/readings/find-stations-map.html>.