

SAFETY BULLETIN FOR DECEMBER 2017

Southern California Wildfires, Air Quality and Traffic Congestion

Widespread wildfires have started again this week in Ventura, Los Angeles and San Bernardino Counties. Close to 85,000 acres in these countries have been impacted and most fires sites are still not fully contained. Very high wind conditions and low humidity are expected to continue this week. As a result new fires have started just this morning along portions of the I405 Highway. This roadway and other major highways in Southern California are closed or severely impacted.

Air quality conditions are poor in the LA and Venture County areas and traffic is snarled as motorists attempt to find alternate routes around fire areas and road closures. This situation is impacting our clients and contractors as well as our employees. If you plan to travel to project or client sites, it is recommended you call ahead. The best course of action may be to postpone meetings and travel until conditions improve. Check the [CalFire](#) website for the latest information regarding incidents in your area.

If you live in an area that could be impacted by the fires, be prepared to evacuate when instructed to do so by your local Fire Departments. Pack important documents, family photographs, and valuables in advance. Park your vehicle in the drive way facing out to expedite your exit. Do not attempt to fight the fire.

The fires have generated significant plumes of smoke and fine particles. These air quality conditions can be particularly harmful to persons with pre-existing medical conditions such as asthma, COPD, emphysema, other lung ailments, hypertension, cardiovascular disease, diabetes, obesity, and to the elderly, young children and pregnant women.

Personnel are advised to:

- Limit outside activities as much as possible when air quality is poor or if you see or smell smoke.
- Refrain from vigorous physical exercise such as running outdoors.
- Check current air quality conditions in your area at the [South Coast Air Quality Management District](#) websites.
- Stay indoors with windows closed and use air conditioning that does not draw outside air into the home.
- Use N-95 dust masks, available at local hardware stores, if your medical condition puts you at risk.
- Consider leaving the area if your personal health condition makes you vulnerable to asthmatic symptoms, you have difficulty breathing, or the air quality worsens your general physical wellbeing.

As fires become contained and weather conditions improve, the general air quality will clear and roads will be reopened. In the interim, protect your health, stay safe, and contact Regional Safety Manager if you have specific questions or concern.