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NEWS RELEASE

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The Environment Department's mission is to protect and restore the environment and to foster a healthy and prosperous New Mexico for present and future generations.

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Environment and Health Departments Issue Smoke Advisory for Potential Impacts to Northern New Mexico

Residents of Vallecitos Canyon Advised to Close Windows Overnight

SANTA FE, NM — The New Mexico Environment Department and New Mexico Department of Health today issued a smoke advisory for Vallecitos Canyon and surrounding Northern New Mexico communities due to smoke from the [Bonita Fire](#). The advisory will be in effect through Friday.

The lightning-caused Bonita Fire in Carson National Forest is being managed by the U.S. Forest Service and has grown to 1,200 acres. Fire managers will continue burning operations Wednesday and Thursday in order to secure the fire's perimeter. Ignitions are expected to continue into the early Wednesday evening, which will increase the expected smoke impacts in the communities in Vallecitos Canyon overnight.

It is recommended that all residents of Vallecitos Canyon close their windows overnight Wednesday and keep them closed until late Thursday morning or until smoke lifts and visibility improves to about five miles.

"Smoke can hurt your eyes, irritate your respiratory system, and intensify chronic heart and lung problems," said Department of Health Cabinet Secretary, Lynn Gallagher. "For this reason, residents in Vallecitos Canyon with respiratory or heart disease, adults over age 65, young children, and pregnant women should consider relocating until the air quality improves. By next week, smoke concentrations are expected to be consistently lower."

Your eyes are useful tools to determine if it's safe to be outside. Even if you smell smoke, the air quality may still be good. Remember: if visibility is over five miles, the air quality is generally good. However, no matter how far you can see, if you are having health effects from smoke exposure then take extra care to stay inside or get to an area with better air quality. You should also see your doctor or healthcare professional as needed.

For guidance on visibility distances, and for more information on air quality and protecting your health, please visit <https://nmtracking.org/fire>, which includes maps with examples.

When you are advised to stay indoors or visibility is below three miles outdoors, keep indoor air as clean as possible. Do not vacuum anywhere in the house, unless using a HEPA-filter equipped vacuum. You can also create
(more)

your own 'clean room', using an interior room, with as few windows and doors as possible, such as a bedroom. Keep windows and doors closed. You can build your own air purifier which can reduce about 90% of the particles in the indoor air. See how, here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kH5APw_SLUU

If you do not have an air conditioner and it is too warm to stay inside with the windows closed, seek shelter elsewhere such as at a relative's or friend's home. During the day consider going to public libraries, senior centers and other public places that may have air conditioning. For multi-day events, consider relocating until the air quality improves. Get more stay cool tips here: <https://nmtracking.org/health/heatstress/Heat.html>.

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For your Twitter feed: NM Health & Environment Depts. issue smoke advisory for Vallecitos Canyon & northern NM due to [Bonita Fire](http://bit.ly/2t42YaG). <http://bit.ly/2t42YaG> #NMED, #DOH

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For your Facebook feed: NM Health & Environment Depts. issue smoke advisory for Vallecitos Canyon & northern NM due to [Bonita Fire](http://bit.ly/2t42YaG). Residents of Vallecitos Canyon advised to close windows overnight <http://bit.ly/2t42YaG> #NMED, #DOH

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