

**ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION
Division of Air Quality**

SITUATION REPORT

**AIR QUALITY ADVISORY
South Central AK #2009-08**

LOCATION(S) IMPACTED: Copper River Basin.

TIME/DATE OF UPDATE: Tuesday, August 4, 2:00 PM.

VALID TIME: Valid August 4 at 2:00 PM until August 5 at 12:00 PM.

TIME/DATE OF THE NEXT REPORT: Wednesday, Aug 5, 12:00 PM.

ADVISORY: The Chakina Fire south of the Chitina River continues to burn within the fire perimeter, and areas of smoke continue to fill in the nearby river and glacial valleys. Visibilities are reduced as far west as Gulkana. Overall air quality around this region will be **good** to **moderate**, with some areas experiencing periods that are **unhealthy**.

The forecast for the Copper River Basin for the rest of Tuesday is for partly cloudy skies, and for south winds, strongest along the Copper River. These winds will slowly diminish on Wednesday but will remain from the south, and mostly cloudy skies are expected. Local wind flow along the Chitina and Copper Rivers will affect smoke dispersion and the area for the greatest impact, as smoke will likely continue to drift west/northwest along the river valleys.

Keep in mind that areas immediately downwind of any fire will experience **hazardous** levels of smoke. Generally, worse conditions occur overnight and during the early morning hours, as the atmosphere cools and brings smoke to the surface. During the day, surface heating will mix smoke and carry it upwards, temporarily improving air quality. Alternatively, hot, dry weather may lead to extensive fire activity, dramatically increasing smoke production, and thus causing the worst visibilities to occur in the late afternoon and early evening hours.

SMOKE AND PUBLIC IMPACT: This is an area forecast, and as such is a general forecast for portions of Interior Alaska. Smoke intensity will vary depending on precise location and local wind flow patterns. Smoke concentrations will be such that they could impact public health at times. It is advised that travelers check local weather as smoke conditions may vary considerably from one locality to the next. The most recent weather observations may be found on National Weather Service's homepage at <http://pafc.arh.noaa.gov/obs.php>.

DEC advises anyone with respiratory illness or heart disease, the elderly, and children to avoid exposure to smoke. All others are cautioned to avoid outdoor activities or physical exertion when conditions reach unhealthy levels, as defined below:

The following table is the Air Quality Index for Particle Pollution.

Index Values	Levels of Health Concern	Cautionary Statements
0-50	Good	None
51-100	Moderate	Unusually sensitive people should consider reducing prolonged or heavy exertion.
101-150	Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups	People with heart or lung disease, the elderly and children should reduce prolonged or heavy exertion.
151-200	Unhealthy	People with respiratory or heart disease, the elderly and children should avoid prolonged exertion; everyone else should limit prolonged exertion.
201-300	Very Unhealthy	People with respiratory or heart disease, the elderly and children should avoid any outdoor activity; everyone else should avoid prolonged exertion.
Over 300	Hazardous	Everyone should avoid any outdoor exertion; people with respiratory or heart disease, the elderly and children should remain indoors.

When air quality data is unavailable, the following **Air Quality Smoke Reference Guide** may be used to estimate air quality levels and potential health impacts:

Visibility	Air Quality
10+ miles	Good
6 - 9 miles	Moderate
3 - 5 miles	Unhealthy for sensitive groups
1.5 - 2.5 miles	Unhealthy
0.9 - 1.4 miles	Very Unhealthy
0.8 miles or less	Hazardous

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

For information on Wildfire Smoke from the Department of Health and Social Services, visit their website at <http://www.epi.alaska.gov/eh/wildfire/default.htm>.

For information on Wildfire Smoke from the Department of Environmental Conservation, Air Quality Division, visit the website at <http://www.dec.state.ak.us/air/smokemain.htm>.

For information on road conditions around Alaska, visit the Road Traveler Information System at <http://511.alaska.gov/>.

For information on this advisory, contact Cindy Dettmer-Shea with the Division of Air Quality, at 907-269-7676.

NOTIFICATION LIST:

Copper River Basin (141)

Glennallen
Gulkana
Gakona
Eureka
McCarthy
Paxson
Slana
Nabesna
Chisana
Copper Center
Tazlina
Tonsina
Tolsona
Silver Springs
Nelchina
Mendeltna
Lake Louise
Kenny Lake
Chistochina
Chitina
Copperville