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**From:** S.C. DHEC  
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For Immediate Release  
Nov. 14, 2016

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## DHEC determines wildfire smoke is impacting SC

COLUMBIA, S.C. - Residents of South Carolina should be aware of possible health effects related to smoke from wildfires in North Carolina, Georgia, Tennessee, and South Carolina, the Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC) reported today. Depending on wind conditions, multiple areas could be affected. Monitors are indicating elevated levels of particulate matter in several areas of the state. Currently, the upstate counties are most affected. However, areas of the state north of I-20 and west of I-77 are at risk.

According to Rhonda Thompson, Chief of the Bureau of Air Quality, "Smoke from these fires can irritate the eyes and respiratory system, as well as aggravate or exacerbate chronic heart and lung diseases."

DHEC recommends individuals with respiratory health issues limit time spent outdoors to avoid the smoke. Take measures to prevent outdoor smoke from getting inside. Keep windows and doors closed. If operating an air conditioner/central heating unit, keep the fresh-air intake closed and the filter clean to prevent outdoor smoke from getting inside.

People near the wildfires should monitor the situation closely. See the South Carolina Forestry Commission website for the most up to date information ([www.state.sc.us/forest](http://www.state.sc.us/forest)).

These conditions may be present for the next several days. For information about the areas affected by the smoke, along with the location and current conditions of the

wildfires, visit [https://airnow.gov/index.cfm?action=topics.smoke\\_wildfires](https://airnow.gov/index.cfm?action=topics.smoke_wildfires).

For additional information about smoke and its health affects, visit <http://www.scdhec.gov/HomeAndEnvironment/DisasterPreparedness/Wildfires/>.

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