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CWU Smoke Guidelines

The safety of our students and employees is our highest concern and top responsibility in any emergency situation. After experiencing several summers defined by wildfire, sadly, CWU now is ready whenever wildfire strikes.

An essential part of this readiness is managing days when the air quality is compromised. The State of Washington Department of Ecology monitors air quality through a tool that measures carbon monoxide, nitrogen dioxide, ozone, sulfur dioxide, and particle pollution, both fine (PM 2.5) and larger (PM10), and places concentrations on a scale:

- 0-50 Good
- 51-100 Moderate
- 101-150 Unhealthy for sensitive groups
- 151-200 Unhealthy
- 201-300 Very unhealthy
- 301-500 Hazardous

When outside air quality on this scale registers as “unhealthy” or worse, we move events and change work and activity schedules, and we make N-95 face masks available all over campus. CWU Environmental Health and Safety staff use the same scale when monitoring air quality inside and outside. Facilities Management adjusts ventilation systems accordingly to ensure good air quality in all of our buildings, especially when the air quality outside is “unhealthy” or worse.

Here are a few other notes about how we’re ensuring the success of our students and protecting our employees this fall.

Student Success - The Dean of Student Success has reminded students of the importance of maintaining attendance and has instructed students to notify faculty if they need to miss a class because of respiratory concerns.

Employees - When the air quality index is “unhealthy” or worse, employees who work outside will wear masks and change them frequently. They’ll have extended break time, and supervisors will, as needed, be able to flex work locations, hours and shifts, and check in with employees after each shift.

Abridged statement from President James Gaudino’s Sept. 8, 2017 “Wildfire and Smoke Update” email.

Public Affairs

400 E University Way • Ellensburg WA 98926 • Office: 509-963-1484
Barge Hall 402 • Email: Dawn.Alford@cwu.edu • Web: cwu.edu/public-affairs
EEO/AA/TITLE IX INSTITUTION • FOR ACCOMMODATION EMAIL: DS@CWU.EDU.

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