

Forest Fires

An average of 1,500 wildfires damage or destroy 7,000 acres of New Jersey's forests each year. Fire season begins in spring and continues through the fall, but wildfires can happen any month of the year.

Planning for wildfires is important even if you do not live near a wooded area, because smoke can reach communities miles away.

Wildfire smoke's greatest health threat is to those with heart and lung conditions, pregnant women, older adults, children, and outdoor workers. If you have asthma or other lung conditions, follow your respiratory management plan. See a doctor if you have a hard time breathing or if your normal symptoms worsen.

People with chronic diseases should check with their healthcare provider about precautions needed ahead of smoke events.

There are strategies anyone can take to limit exposure to wildfire smoke including staying indoors, limiting outdoor physical activity, using respiratory protection (masking) appropriately, and keeping indoor air as clean as possible.

There are online tools available to help with getting information about active wildfires and finding out the air quality in your neighborhood. The New Jersey Forest Fire Services (<https://www.nj.gov/dep/parksandforests/fire/>) and The AirNow website (www.airnow.gov) provide reports based on the Air Quality Index (AQI) which is a nationally uniform index for reporting and predicting daily air quality across the country.