

COMMUNITY PLANNING FOR WILDFIRE SMOKE

Preparing for Wildfire Smoke

- **Collaborate** with local emergency staff, health authorities, or community volunteers to **tailor emergency plans** that include considerations for wildfire smoke safety in ways that reflect local needs and resources.
- **Support community gathering centres** including schools, childcare centres, care homes, and health centres in creating smoke resilience plans to reduce exposure during smoke events (see ASHRAE Guidelines for sample smoke resilience plans).
- **Establish local air monitoring** by using tools like the [WeatherCAN app](#) or [AQmap](#) to track air quality in real time. Air quality alerts may not always reflect current conditions of the geographic location. If air quality reports are not accurate to the community, consider installing a local air quality monitor - ideally both indoor and outdoor - at a communal gathering space or public space.
- **Raise awareness and share resources** to reduce smoke risks and inform community members of designated cool & clean air spaces, if available.

Responding During Smoke Events

- **Establish cool & clean air spaces** that are protected from smoke intrusion by:
 - Closing windows and doors (if extreme heat is not present)
 - Blocking drafts with towels, tape, or plastic sheeting.
 - Using portable HEPA air purifiers or building a [DIY box fan filter](#).
 - Using MERV 13 + and carbon filters to reduce odour and particulate pollutants.
 - Spaces may also be equipped with bottled water, chairs and blankets, fans and A/C units, and information about extreme heat and smoke safety.
- **Assist community members** who may not be able to reach clean air spaces or collect equipment on their own by arranging delivery through local staff, health teams, or community volunteers where possible.
- **Conduct wellness checks** by phone or in person, particularly on older adults, people living alone, or those with pre-existing health concerns. Communities may use the check-in to ensure they have access to supplies, clean air spaces, or health services.