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13th, 14th
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Latino Times

A BILINGUAL PUBLICATION



13th, 14th
15th & 16th

FREE | GRATIS - May 2021

May 2021

www.latinotimes.org

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KNOW YOUR COLORS - Protect your health from California fire season deadly smoke

California Fire season has started early this year. Health Plan of San Joaquin (HPSJ) has vital facts to keep the regionwide community safe. HPSJ members are urged to plan ahead with guidance at <https://www.hpsj.com/stay-safe-during-fire-season/>.

Whether all people are directly in a fire warning or evacuation zone, the air quality generated from these fires finds all California residents. HPSJ wants everyone to KNOW YOUR COLORS when it comes to air quality and California's fire season.

Fire season smoke is dangerous. Here is valuable information on how to stay healthy and safe during our fire season. The source is AirNow.gov

at www.airnow.gov/.

Particle pollution (from California fires) is composed of microscopic solids or liquid droplets that are so small that they can get deep into the lungs and cause serious health problems. When exposed to these small particles, people with heart or lung diseases and older adults are more at risk of hospital and emergency room visits or, in some cases, even death from heart or lung disease.

Even if you are healthy, you may experience temporary symptoms from exposure to elevated levels of particles. Symptoms may include irritation of the eyes, nose and throat; coughing; phlegm; chest tightness; and shortness of breath.

At greatest risk from particle pollution are people with heart or lung disease, older adults (possibly because they may have undiagnosed heart or lung disease), and children.

Find more for your health and safety at AirNow. There is even a color-coded app for your PC and smart phone, so you can track the air quality in your area.

Health Plan of San Joaquin (HPSJ) Members are encouraged to keep in touch with their HPSJ provider, our helpful Customer Service agents, or HealthReach 24/7, the advice nurse/physician line for HPSJ.

HOW PEOPLE CAN PROTECT THEMSELVES, AND OTHERS

Between the smoke generated by

California fires, the asthma that many have, and the results of COVID-19 on respiratory health, it is good to keep in mind we are not defenseless.

HPSJ Chief Medical Officer Dr. Lakshmi Dhanvanthari, MD, said: "Remember, your actions will continue to save lives. Wear a mask. Wash your hands. Watch your distance. When it's your turn, please get vaccinated. Then, until everyone is safe, keep on being a protector: masking, handwashing, and physical distancing."

For information on COVID vaccines, see HPSJ's latest MYTH BUSTERS, at www.hpsj.com/coronavirus/, and in Spanish at <https://miembros.hpsj.com/coronavirus/>.