



# Masks for Smoky Conditions



**If you cannot leave the area or do not have access to a smoke free indoor area then using a mask might help you breathe easier**

Choosing the proper particulate mask to protect you from the adverse effects of wildfire smoke is critical. Only masks with NIOSH and N95 or P100 printed on them are classed as particulate respirators and filter out smoke. Particulate masks come in many sizes, shape and colors so it is important to verify the N95 rating before using.

A proper fit is essential for making the mask work, so follow these guidelines:

1. Choose masks with two straps that are placed above and below the ears. Masks with one strap or hooks over the ears are convenient but do not provide the seal needed.
2. Choose a size that fits over your nose and under the chin for a tight seal
3. Some masks have a metal tab across the nose that can be adjusted by gently press down. Other masks provide a foam pieces to create a seal.



Use a new mask daily or when it gets harder to breathe through. If the inside becomes dirty replace the mask immediately. If you become dizzy or nauseated find a less smoky location and remove your mask then seek medical advice.

If you have a respiratory condition, a heart problems or any other health problems that may be amplified by using a mask please contact your health care provider for guidance.

**Breathing through a mask requires extra effort so you will need to scale back activities.**

These masks shouldn't be use on young children, they do not seal well. Respirator masks do not seal well over a beard and would decrease the level of protection.

Even with a mask you may experience breathing problems. Following these guidance may help:

1. Take frequent breaks do not overexert and work at a slower pace
2. Increase you intake of water to keep your nasal passages and throat moist
3. Move to a less smoky area to work if possible
4. Have spare masks available if one becomes dirty. Dirty mask do not filter smoke particle.
5. Staying calm in an emergency situation is very hard but will keep you from breathing extra.

## Examples of Masks

