



News Release

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Eastern Washington wildfires may overtake inactive uranium mine

OLYMPIA — Wildfires may burn in an area of Stevens County that was once a uranium mine site, but it won't make the smoke in the surrounding area any more toxic. Residents should continue to take the necessary precautions to guard against inhaling wildfire smoke.

Midnite Mine is located about three miles northwest of Wellpinit on the Spokane Reservation. The radioactive materials at the inactive mine won't exacerbate the dangers of wildfire smoke if the fires overtake the site as the naturally occurring radioactive material stays in its original rock form and does not burn.

People are encouraged to remain indoors to avoid breathing smoky air, which can cause coughing, chest pain and shortness of breath in healthy people. Older adults and children are at higher risk of experiencing health effects from air pollution. Pregnant women and people with diabetes should also take precautions to limit their exposure to smoke.

It's recommended that residents turn on their air conditioner and keep the fresh-air intake closed and set the unit to recirculate. A high-efficiency particulate air (HEPA) can also be used to reduce indoor air pollution if one is available.

Contact your health care provider if you have specific health concerns and dial 911 for emergency assistance if symptoms are serious.

Visit Northeast Tri County Health District's website for [more information on smoke advisories](#) in the Stevens County area. People can also go to the state Department of Ecology's website to [monitor current air quality information in their local area](#).

The [Department of Health website](#) (www.doh.wa.gov) is your source for *a healthy dose of information*. Also, [find us on Facebook](#) and [follow us on Twitter](#).

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