

POOR AIR QUALITY SMOKE / ASH



PREPAREDNESS GUIDEPPOST

No matter what the source, it's important for older adults to protect themselves from breathing harmful gases and inhaling the small particles or particulate matter (PM), that is present in unclean air. Even when you can't see visible smoke, air quality can still be bad and create or aggravate existing health problems.

How to determine Air Quality?

- OSU Corvallis Campus AQI <https://ehs.oregonstate.edu/aqi-map>
- Air Quality Index <https://www.airnow.gov/?city=Corvallis&state=OR&country=USA>
- National Weather Service <http://www.weather.gov/safety>

If driving is crucial, then:

- Drive slowly
- Use headlights and ample windshield fluid (Using wipers on dry ash may scratch the windshield)
- Change oil and oil filters frequently, every 50-100 miles in heavy dust
- Clean wheel brake assemblies every 50-100 miles for very severe road conditions
- Change air filters frequently

Ash Clean Up Precautions

- Always wear PPE (minimum of a dust mask or N95 and goggles)
- Lightly water down the ash deposits before they are removed by shoveling
- Be careful not to excessively wet the deposits on roofs, causing excess loading and danger of collapse
- Use extra precaution on ladders and roofs. The ash makes surfaces slippery

Ash Clean Up Procedures

- Place the ash into heavy duty plastic bags
- Cut grass and hedges only after rain or light sprinkling and bag the clippings
- Ensure good ventilation while cleaning
- Vacuum surfaces before wiping as the fine grit ash will scratch most surfaces
- Use a wetting agent, damp rag
- Use compressed air to clean computer, TV and radio equipment
- Replace air filters in vehicles and HVAC systems
- If pets go out, brush them before letting them indoors