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Plan Ahead for Extreme Air Conditions | Earth911.com

September 22, 2018

Monday, October 22 2018, 8:24 AM

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Residents in some parts of the American West are already used to thinking of wildfires as seasonal, rather than infrequent, threats. As the annual acreage burned by wildfires increases, residential areas throughout the country are coming under threat more frequently. Residents in many regions of the U.S. must now prepare for fire season. In fact, as the fires grow bigger, and multiple fires burn at the same time, air quality becomes an issue even for people who live far away from the flames. Take time at the end of each year's fire season to prepare for next summer's smokestorms.

Stay Safe

If you live in a region that is susceptible to wildfires (in California, check this map; everywhere else, check your county's emergency management website), your first priority is to plan for your immediate safety during a wildfire.

Prepare and practice a wildfire action plan well in advance of wildfire season. A good plan should include strategies

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Stay Healthy

In addition to the immediate risk of flames, residents in areas that experience wildfires — and for many hundreds of miles beyond them — need to prepare for extreme air pollution during fire season. Smoke from wildfires can create unhealthy air states away from the actual blaze. This year, a smokestorm blanketed the entire Pacific Northwest in