

Appendix A – KDHE Press Releases

KDHE News Release – Air Quality Health Advisory



KDHE News Release

[A to Z Topic Listing](#)

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www.kdheks.gov

Robert Moser, MD, Secretary

Department of Health & Environment

Sam Brownback, Governor

For Immediate Release
March 17, 2011

[Jonathan Laranoe, 785-291-3684](#)

Air Quality Health Advisory

Mid-March through the end of April is the time of the year when large areas of Kansas' Flint Hills rangeland are burned. These burns are conducted to provide better forage for cattle, and to help control invasive species such as Eastern Red Cedar and Sumac. Well planned and managed periodic burns can minimize fire safety danger and are an inexpensive tool for managing rangeland.

For burns to be conducted safely and effectively, weather and rangeland conditions must be right. In years when these conditions are rare, many landowners conduct burns at the same time. If these burns take place when meteorological conditions do not disperse the smoke, air pollutants from the burns can affect persons in the Flint Hills and can be carried long distances to more populated areas.

If you are healthy, you're usually not at a major risk from short-term exposures to smoke. Still, it's a good idea to avoid breathing smoke if you can help it. Smoke is made up of a complex mixture of gases and fine particles produced when wood and other organic matter burn. The burns also result in ozone formation when some of the gases combine in a chemical reaction in the atmosphere. The fine particles can get into your eyes and respiratory system, where they can cause health problems such as burning eyes, runny nose and illnesses such as bronchitis. Fine particles and ozone also can aggravate chronic heart and lung diseases - and even are linked to premature deaths in people with these conditions.

Older adults and children are at highest risk for health problems especially those with underlying health conditions. Children's respiratory systems are still developing and they breathe more air per pound of body weight than adults, therefore children have a greater exposure. While we cannot eliminate exposure to smoke during the burning season, there are ways to reduce it and to reduce related health impacts. It is important for everyone to limit their exposure to smoke, especially if you fall into one of the high-risk categories. Here are some steps you can take to protect your health on days when smoke is impacting your community:

- Healthy people should curtail or avoid strenuous outdoor exercise.
- People with heart or breathing related illnesses should remain indoors
- Help keep indoor air clean by closing doors and windows and running the air conditioner on 'recirculate' setting.
- Keep always moist by drinking lots of water.
- Contact your doctor if you have symptoms such as chest pain, chest tightness, shortness of breath or severe fatigue.

For more information about the burning in the Flint Hills, the Flint Hills Smoke Management Plan and the April burn restrictions associated with the plan, please visit www.kstfire.org for more information.

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At KDHE, our mission is to protect and improve the health and environment of all Kansans.

Through education, direct services and the assessment of data and trends, coupled with policy development and enforcement, KDHE will improve health and quality of

[http://www.kdheks.gov/news/web_archives/2011/03172011.htm\(6/25/2012 12:50:23 PM\)](http://www.kdheks.gov/news/web_archives/2011/03172011.htm(6/25/2012 12:50:23 PM))

KDHE News Release - Ozone levels heightened due to the Flint Hills burning



KDHE News Release

[A to Z Topic Listing](#)

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Sam Brownback, Governor

For Immediate Release
April 13, 2011

[Miranda Myrick, 785-297-5795](#)

Ozone levels heightened due to the Flint Hills burning

Weather conditions over the last two weeks have been conducive to burning grasslands in the Flint Hills area of Kansas. These burns are conducted to provide better forage for cattle and to help control invasive species such as Eastern Red Cedar and Sumac. Well planned and managed periodic burns can minimize fire safety danger and is a valuable tool for managing rangeland. They can, however, create air quality impacts when meteorological conditions do not provide for adequate dispersion of the pollutants formed by the burns. Air pollutants from the burns can affect persons in the Flint Hills and can be carried long distances to more populated areas.

KDHE air quality monitors measured readings that exceeded national air quality standards for ozone in Sedgwick and Linn counties on April 6 and in Shawnee County on April 12. Ozone is an air pollutant that is formed in the atmosphere by the reaction of gaseous pollutants that are emitted by the fires. The monitors also recorded higher than normal levels of particulate matter.

If you are healthy, you're usually not at a major risk from short-term exposures to smoke. Smoke is made up of a complex mixture of gases and fine particles produced when wood and other organic matter burn. The fine particles can get into your eyes and respiratory system, where they can cause health problems such as burning eyes, runny nose, and illnesses such as bronchitis. Fine particles and ozone can also aggravate chronic heart and lung diseases. Older adults and children are at highest risk for health problems especially those with underlying health conditions. There are ways to reduce exposure to smoke during the burning season and the related health impacts. It is important to limit your exposure to smoke, especially if you fall into one of the high-risk categories. Here are steps you can take to protect your health on days when smoke is present:

- Healthy people should curtail or avoid strenuous outdoor exercise.
- People with heart or breathing related illnesses should remain indoors.
- Help keep indoor air clean by closing doors and windows and running the air conditioner on 'recirculate' setting.
- Keep always moist by drinking lots of water.
- Contact your doctor if you have symptoms such as chest pain, chest tightness, shortness of breath or severe fatigue.

KDHE worked with many partners over the last year to develop the Flint Hills Smoke Management Plan to address the air quality impacts that result from the annual burning. The plan includes recommended burning practices to minimize and disperse the smoke produced by the fires. The plan was also the impetus for creation of a website, hosted by KSU Extension, that has a modeling tool to allow land managers to determine if meteorological conditions are good for dispersing smoke from fires they are planning. States with smoke management plans in place have the opportunity to submit a request to EPA to have the data "tagged" so it is not used in determining compliance with the air quality standard.

"While we are disappointed with the high readings over the last week, we are optimistic that as the smoke management plan provisions and the modeling tool are more widely used, these events will decline in the future," said Tom Gross with the Bureau of Air.

For more information about the burning in the Flint Hills, the Flint Hills Smoke Management Plan and the modeling tool, please visit the following

[http://www.kdheks.gov/news/web_archives/2011/04132011.htm\(6/25/2012 12:51:44 PM\)](http://www.kdheks.gov/news/web_archives/2011/04132011.htm(6/25/2012 12:51:44 PM))

KDHE News Release - Air Quality Health Advisory



KDHE News Release



Mark Parkinson, Governor
Roderick L. Brandy, Secretary

www.kdheks.gov

For Immediate Release
April 8, 2010

[Katie Patterson-Ingels, 785-368-8053](mailto:Katie.Patterson-Ingels@ks.gov)

Air Quality Health Advisory

Favorable weather conditions may be conducive to rangeland burning in the upcoming days. The Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE) anticipates an increase in the number of acres burned, which could result in elevated air pollution levels.

If you are healthy, you are usually not at major risk from short-term exposures to smoke. Although, it still is a good idea to avoid breathing smoke if you can help it. Smoke consists of a complex mixture of gases and fine particles produced when wood and other organic matter burn. The burns also result in ozone formation when some of the gases combine in a chemical reaction in the atmosphere. The fine particles can get into your eyes and respiratory system, where they can cause health problems such as burning eyes, runny nose, and illnesses such as bronchitis. Fine particles and ozone also can aggravate chronic heart and lung diseases - and even are linked to premature deaths in people with these conditions.

Older adults and children are at highest risk for health problems especially those with underlying health conditions. Children's respiratory systems are still developing and they breathe more air per pound of body weight than adults, therefore children have a greater exposure. While we cannot eliminate exposure to smoke during the burning season, there are ways to reduce it and to reduce related health impacts. It is important for everyone to limit their exposure to smoke, especially if you fall into one of the high-risk categories. Here are some steps you can take to protect your health on days when smoke is impacting your community:

- Healthy people should curtail or avoid strenuous outdoor exercise.
- People with heart or breathing related illnesses should remain indoors
- Help keep indoor air clean by closing doors and windows and running the air conditioner on "recirculate" setting.
- Keep always moist by drinking lots of water.
- Contact your doctor if you have symptoms such as chest pain, chest tightness, shortness of breath or severe fatigue.

More information is available at http://www.airnow.gov/index.cfm?action=topics.smoke_events.

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At KDHE, our mission is to protect and improve the health and environment of all Kansans.

Through education, direct services and the assessment of data and trends, coupled with policy development and enforcement, KDHE will improve health and quality of life. We prevent illness, injuries and foster a safe and sustainable environment for the people of Kansas.

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