

EPA: Wildfire Smoke and Health Factsheets

Indoor Air Filtration

<https://www.epa.gov/system/files/documents/2026-06/indoor-air-filtration-factsheet.pdf>

Using high-efficiency HVAC filters, portable air cleaners (PACs), and do-it-yourself (DIY) air cleaners, alone or in combination, can reduce smoke levels indoors. You will want to choose a filtration option for your home before a smoke event occurs, if possible, because they may be difficult to get during a smoke event. This fact sheet explains the options for filtering your home's indoor air to reduce exposure to wildfire smoke.

Filtration Options PACs and DIY air cleaners are intended to deliver cleaner air to a single room, while HVAC filters (sometimes called in-duct air cleaners) can deliver cleaner air to the whole home. However, two or more well-placed PACs and/or DIY air cleaners can be just as effective and may cost less than operating a central air system continuously with a high-efficiency filter. The table on the next page compares these three filtration options.

Types of Air-Cleaning Technologies

Use only California Air Resources Board (CARB)–certified air cleaners because they produce little or no ozone, a harmful air pollutant. A single air cleaning product may use one or more air-cleaning technologies. These technologies usually remove particles in one of the following ways:

- Mechanical air cleaners and filters pull air through a filter that traps particles. For example, HEPA filters and other pleated filters are mechanical filters. Mechanical air cleaners and filters, especially higher-efficiency filters, effectively trap particles from smoke and do not produce ozone.
- Electronic air cleaners use electric fields to remove particles from the air. This category includes ionizers, electrostatic precipitators, and other electronic air-cleaning technologies. Electronic air cleaners are not recommended for smoke removal because it is not clear that they can effectively remove smoke particles from the air and they may produce ozone.