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DPHHS HAN Advisory

Distributed via the DPHHS Health Alert Network (HAN) System
Wednesday, August 1, 2007 11:45 AM

To: Public Health Partners
From: Office of PHEP & Training
Date: August 1, 2007
RE: Public Health Air Quality Advisories

The Department of Environmental Quality monitors air quality for the State of Montana. Due to severe fire conditions in many areas of the state, the Department of Environmental Quality is partnering with the Department of Public Health and Human Services to keep Public Health Professionals informed about current conditions on a daily basis.

DPHHS and DEQ will host an iLinc presentation on Thursday, Aug 2, 2007 at 11:30 AM. The featured speakers will be Meteorologist, John Coefield and Dr. Steve Helgerson. John and Steve will review the material available through DEQ Website, how the data is gathered, and how it can be used locally to inform your residents. Many resources are available to download to use as handouts. John will address how to navigate the DEQ sites and make the information more usable for your agency.

To join the conference call, dial 888-582-3536 and enter the pass code 8339961. To view the computer-based part of the presentation, log on to <http://nwcphp.ilinc.com>. Select "join" under Public Sessions on the left of the page. Space is limited to 40 participants so we are requesting that jurisdictions connecting do so from a central location. *NOTE: If you haven't used iLinc on your computer go to <http://nwcphp.ilinc.com> and click on system test on the left hand side of the page to test/setup your computer **prior** to the call.*

Beginning Friday, Aug.3, the PHEP office will send daily email updates regarding smoke conditions and provide the link to the DEQ website. In order to understand the terminology in the reports, we encourage you to participate in the iLinc session. **For those that can't make it on short notice, we will record the session to the best of our ability and post to the Training and Communication Center (TCC) and/or schedule an additional session if necessary.**

Wildfire smoke can impact Montana residents on many different levels, depending on age, health conditions, outdoor activities, and the level of particulates in the air. Help DEQ communicate the advisories to vulnerable populations by informing yourselves. For more information, please contact the PHEP program at 444-0732.

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The goal of Montana's Health Alert Network is to transmit information to local public health authorities as quickly as possible, and assign a suitable priority to the message that is sensitive to the impact of a health-related event providing information of immediate of utility relative to the public health and safety of Montanans. For questions or comments relative to Montana's HAN system you may contact the DPHHS HAN Coordinator, Gerry Wheat at <<mailto:gwheat@mt.gov>>

Categories of Health Alert messages:

- Health Alert:** conveys the highest level of importance; warrants immediate action or attention.
- Health Advisory:** provides important information for a specific incident or situation; may not require immediate action.
- Health Update:** provides updated information regarding an incident or situation; unlikely to require immediate action.

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