

# Hazard Alert



## Hazard Summary: Forest Fires and Dump Fires

Smoke from a forest or dump fire can affect the surrounding community. It may contain a mixture of chemicals and fine particles that endanger human health. The type and amount of particles and chemicals in the smoke will vary depending on what materials are burning, and the burn temperature.

Health effects from the smoke may affect some people in the workplace more than others. People with heart or lung conditions, infants, young children, and the elderly are particularly at risk.

## Hazard Location:

Wooded Areas, Landfills and Surrounding Communities

## Safe Work Practices:

To reduce exposure to smoke in the workplace, workers should stay indoors as much as possible. Close doors and windows, and turn off all air exchangers. If you have to go outside for work, limit physical activity.

Symptoms to watch out for include wheezing, breathing difficulty, tightness in the chest, light headedness, and dizziness. Smoke may also irritate eyes, nose, and throat. Seek medical attention if you develop symptoms that you cannot manage or persist.

You have the right to refuse work if the level of smoke compromises your safety in the workplace. Contact the WSCC for more details.

## What the Legislation Says:

### NWT and Nunavut Occupational Health and Safety Regulations:

#### Section 89

(1) If it is not reasonably possible to protect the health and safety of a worker by design if a plant and work processes, suitable work practices or administrative controls, an employer shall ensure that the worker wears or uses suitable and adequate personal protective equipment.

(2) If personal protective equipment will not effectively protect a worker, an employer shall, if reasonably possible, provide alternative work arrangements for the worker.

**NWT and Nunavut Mine Health and Safety Regulations:**

**Section 9**

9.35. Where an employee is exposed to a hazard, the manager shall provide information to the employee on the health consequences of exposure and the importance of work practices and engineering controls in limiting exposure.

**The WSCC is committed to safety. For more information on workplace health and safety, call us toll-free or visit our website.**