

### Wildfire Smoke Response

#### Communicating on Wildfire Smoke

Alameda County is working to expand communication to the public during wildfire smoke events. Our Sustainability Office has partnered with the Public Health Department, Office of Emergency Services, and Fire Department to address how agencies respond to poor air quality events and how to effectively communicate to populations most vulnerable to smoke impacts.



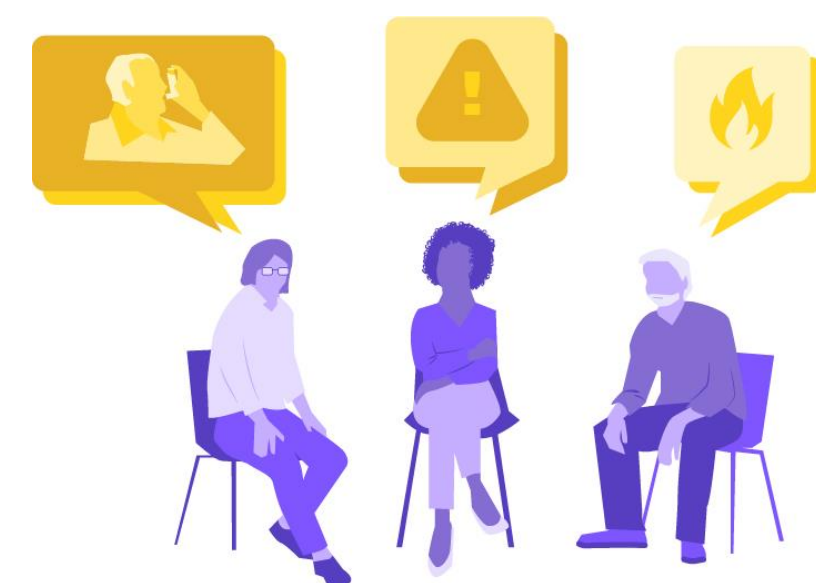
#### This project has 3 key components:

##### Engaging Vulnerable Populations

- Understand vulnerable populations' preferred method of communication.
- 3 focus groups to gather needs of the unhoused population, seniors, families with young children, non-English speakers, and people with respiratory issues.
- Additional outreach targeted towards low-income households and outdoor workers.

##### Cross-Agency Workshop

- Convene County agencies in a half-day workshop to discuss effective ways of messaging based on past experiences with wildfire smoke and findings from the community engagement.



##### Communication Protocol

- At least 2 working groups through OES and Public Health to develop process for how information dissemination will occur during wildfire smoke events.
- OES protocol will be codified.

### Results

#### Outcomes to Date

- Secured \$70,000 in grant funding for the project.
- Hired community engagement consultant to lead outreach to vulnerable communities.

#### Future Outcomes

- Half-day workshop where County agencies will discuss best practices for communicating to vulnerable populations around smoky air.
- 2 working groups headed by OES and Public Health respectively will create protocols for responding to wildfire smoke.



### Lessons Learned

#### Successful Strategies:

- Ensure that key point persons in partner agencies have the capacity to commit to the project. If they do not, find ways to help expand their capacity.
- Be flexible and able to adapt to unexpected delays in the project timeline.

#### Beyond the Grant Project

Our intention is that the relationships built between agencies and the models on communication protocols developed from the workshop can be expanded and applied to other communication efforts around disaster preparedness and responding to climate-related challenges.

Erin Tou

After writing my senior honors thesis on the challenges to resilience planning in response to sea level rise, I wanted to experience how climate adaptation works at the local government level.

#### Acknowledgements:

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