

Weatherize Your Home to Keep Wildfire Smoke Out

Air-quality emergencies caused by wildfire smoke are becoming increasingly common. One of the best ways to stay safe and comfortable during smoke events is to protect the inside of your home from unhealthy air quality through weatherization.

Seal it Tight and Ventilate Right

A [weatherization contractor](#) can thoroughly assess your home and seal any leaks, even in hard-to-reach places such as your attic, crawlspace and ductwork. They may also recommend upgrading your furnace to accommodate a more effective filter, or replacing old doors and windows. These preventative measures are the best ways to keep smoke from seeping into your home.

When Smoke Is Present

Even if your home is well-sealed and ventilated, taking these extra steps will help keep the air clean when smoke is present.

- Replace or clean your filters more frequently during a smoke event. Temporarily replace your HVAC system's filters with high-efficiency filters, and immediately replace them with standard filters after the smoke is gone.
- If you have an HVAC system, run the fan to continuously filter the air.
- When possible, avoid activities that create more fine particles indoors, such as cooking, using chemical cleaners and sprays, smoking and vacuuming. Do not turn on your range hood or bathroom exhaust fans.
- Close the damper in your fireplace, then stretch a plastic bag across the front and seal it with blue painter's tape.
- Place damp towels at the bottom of exterior doors and seal your mail slot.
- Run a portable air purifier with a HEPA filter if you have one, or tape a box fan to a high-efficiency furnace filter for a temporary solution.

The EPA recommends using fans and air conditioning to stay cool. If this is not possible, seek shelter elsewhere.

DIY Weatherization Tips

- **Inspect external doors and windows for air leaks. Use caulk and weatherstripping to seal any drafty spots.**
- **Check for air leaks where plumbing, ducting or wiring come through walls or floors. Seal with caulk or spray foam.**
- **Replace the filter in your furnace regularly and clean the filters in your ductless heat pump.**

