

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 20, 2015

The Ruby Valley Hospital Recommends Everyone Stay Indoors Due To Poor Air Quality

With the current poor air quality conditions, the Ruby Valley Hospital strongly recommends that all residents and visitors stay indoors whenever possible. Visibility is less than one mile which indicates extremely high levels of air particulates. “The air quality isn’t just a nuisance,” says Dr. Roman Hendrickson. “Conditions can be life threatening for patients at risk and outdoor activity can trigger severe respiratory and/or heart problems.” Outdoor athletics and children’s sports should be canceled when visibility is less than one mile.

The Ruby Valley Hospital advises that you base your activity decisions on the “5-3-1 Visibility Method” found at www.nmtracking.org/fire. “We could be dealing with severe air quality issues for weeks,” says Hendrickson. “This system is much easier to apply than evaluating air particulates.”

The 5-3-1 Method advises that **everyone** should stay indoors when visibility is one mile or less. At 3 miles of visibility, young children, adults over 65, pregnant women and people with heart or respiratory conditions should stay indoors. If visibility is under 5 miles, these same groups should minimize outdoor activity.

If you must go outside for prolonged periods when visibility is under one mile, “particulate respirators” can help protect your lungs from smoke particles. Look for “N95”, “N100”, or “P100” respirators/masks. These masks may be available at hardware stores or pharmacies. You can also get a mask at the Ruby Valley Hospital or the Ruby Valley Medical Clinics. “You shouldn’t depend on dust or surgical masks or wet bandanas for protection,” counsels Hendrickson. “These don’t filter out the small particles that get into your lungs.”

Breath safely and call the Ruby Valley Medical Clinic at (406) 842-5056 if you have any questions during this emergency.

###

Media Contact: Debra McNeill (406) 684-5344
For The Ruby Valley Hospital, Sheridan, Montana