

## [Csueu308-l] Announcement: Air Quality, Reporting Safety Concerns & More

Csueu308-l <csueu308-l-bounces@lists.csustan.edu>

on behalf of

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To: csueu308-l@csustan.edu <csueu308-l@csustan.edu>



### Chapter 308 Air Quality, Reporting Safety Concerns & More!

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October 7, 2020

#### Air Quality Concerns

We have been communicating almost daily with campus administration regarding concerns about the air quality. Please know we have appealed to the Risk Manager and AVP of HR about the prolonged outdoor physical work being required of Unit 5 staff. The University has met its obligation to worker safety. To avoid and minimize impacts from exposure there are options available to you.

#### Cal/OSHA Required Masks

Cal OSHA regulations require that when the air quality is above 151, employers provide the option of wearing an N95 mask. Risk Management worked closely with Facilities Services to order masks that meet the standard for wildfires. These masks are available to the Unit 5 staff working outdoors. If new masks are not provided daily, you may request a new one if your breathing is impeded or the masks you have is soiled and/or damaged.

Read more about the [Emergency Regulation on Protection from Wildfire Smoke](#)

#### Workers Compensation

Exposure to air pollutants in wildfire smoke can irritate the lungs, cause inflammation, alter immune function,

and increase susceptibility to respiratory infections, likely including COVID-19.

Breathing in smoke can affect you right away, causing:

- Coughing
- Trouble breathing
- Wheezing
- Asthma attacks
- Stinging eyes
- Scratchy throat
- Runny nose
- Irritated sinuses
- Headaches
- Tiredness
- Chest pain
- Fast heartbeat

Should you start to experience these symptoms while working, it is highly recommended you report them to a supervisor, take appropriate sick leave if needed and/or seek prompt medical attention as appropriate.

You may be entitled to workers' compensation (WC) benefits if you are injured or become ill because of your job. Workers' compensation covers most work-related physical or mental injuries and illness. An injury or illness can be caused by one event (such as hurting your back in a fall); by repeated exposures (such as

hurting your wrist from doing the same motion over and over) or injury or illness developed gradually (like tendinitis or hearing loss). If your employer does not learn about your injury **within 30 days**, you could lose your right to receive workers' compensation benefits. For additional information, please call **Krista Vasquez** at (209) 664-6921.

### **Reasonable Accommodation**

Medical conditions can be exacerbated by poor air quality (e.g. asthma, heart conditions, diabetes, lung disease). If you believe your medical condition can and/or has been negatively impacted by prolonged work outdoors, you can request a workplace accommodation. Requests should be submitted to Christina Knott in Human Resources at [cknott@csustan.edu](mailto:cknott@csustan.edu) or 209 667-3352. Workplace accommodations may include being reassigned to an alternate work location and/or different work duties until a hazard no longer exists. A CSUEU steward can assist you through the interactive process of requesting an accommodation. Email Dawn McCulley at [dmcculley@csueu.org](mailto:dmcculley@csueu.org) or 209 667-3466 should you have questions or need assistance.

### **Reporting a Safety Concern**

All employees and students are encouraged to report unsafe work conditions to Safety & Risk Management [online](#) or at (209) 667-3057.

### **Health Advisory**

In November 2018, the University issued the following guidance on [How to Protect Your Lungs and your Health in Smoky Conditions.](#)

Stay Safe,  
Dawn McCulley  
Chapter 308 President / Chief Steward

