

Memorandum

Department of Administration

Office of the Commissioner

To: All Commissioners

Date: June 29, 2004

From: Ray Matiashowski
Commissioner

Phone: 465-5671

Subject: Air Quality Alert: Fairbanks/Interior Alaska

DEC issued an air quality alert yesterday describing the smoke levels in the vicinity of Venetie, Fort Yukon and Fairbanks as "very unhealthy to hazardous." The release goes on to state: "DEC advises everyone with respiratory illness or heart disease, the elderly and children, to avoid outside activity in Fairbanks and Interior Alaska areas affected by forest fire smoke. All others are cautioned to avoid outdoor exertion."

Based on this information, the following applies to all Executive Branch employees in the area covered by the DEC Alert:

1. *Employees whose duties are essential for the health and safety of the public and cannot be interrupted for any length of time* shall report to work. This group includes those classes of employees considered Class One under the collective bargaining law and therefore unable to strike, such as state troopers, correctional officers and nurses in institutions. To the extent possible and prudent, while still protecting the health and safety of the public, outside work should be minimized.
2. *Employees whose duties require that they work outside* and who do not fall in the "essential" category should either be reassigned to work indoors until notified to resume normal activity or ordered not to report to work until notified to return.
3. *Employees who work inside and do not fall within the essential category* are subject to a liberal leave policy
4. *Employees with respiratory illness or heart disease, regardless of whether they work outside or fall within the essential category described in #1 above, should be ordered not to report to work until notified to return.* These employees must contact their supervisors to inform them of their health status, and may be required to provide doctor's certification depending upon the circumstances.

Commissioners and Division Directors may determine that circumstances are such that the outside work of employees not normally considered to be in the essential category cannot be interrupted or delayed and require their presence at work during the alert. These determinations should be made only in exceptional situations; no employee with a doctor certified respiratory illness or heart disease may be so required to report to work.

Employees ordered not to report to work and those who have a respiratory illness or heart disease shall receive their normal base pay for their regularly scheduled hours of work.

Cc: All Directors
Division of Personnel Program Managers