

PM2.5 as the air passes through them. The air resources board recommends their use to limit the effects of wildfire smoke in the home. It maintains a list of devices approved for use in California.

Portable air-cleaning units were once considered specialty purchases, but sales-driven competition has flooded the market, forcing prices down. Where a high-end portable purifier might cost \$800 or more, several models now cost less than \$100. Shoppers can find models with well-known consumer appliance names like Dyson, Hunter, Honeywell and Whirlpool, as well as scores of more obscure manufacturers. Several websites have attempted to evaluate air purifiers, including the size of the room they can effectively clean.

Oregon's Department of Environmental Quality recently reported that unhealthy air conditions were on the rise throughout the state, including urban areas like Portland that are far from the wildfires.

Smoke from the Camp Fire was noted across the continent and as far away as New York City.

About this story:

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And while cities and towns will do what they can—officials in Seattle, for example, announced in June the retrofitting of five buildings to use as “clean-air shelters” on smoky days—the choice for many residents will be closer to home.

Back at Collier Hardware, the

Lucena family has adjusted its stock. Collier keeps plenty of breathing masks on the shelves, Lucena said, and at least a handful of air purifiers are now in the store at all times. Access to an Ace Hardware supply warehouse in Roseville about an hour and a half away means additional units can be obtained quickly.

They are reinforcements the family hopes never to need.

“We know we’ll have fires,” Lucena said. “We just hope they won’t be anything like last year. But we will be ready.” □

WEEKLY DOSE



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