



STATE OF MICHIGAN

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
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MDHHS provides guidance on protecting your health during air quality events due to wildfire smoke

Forecast indicates orange and possibly red Air Quality Index levels in the Upper Peninsula Saturday, could spread statewide Sunday

LANSING, Mich. – With the weekend forecast predicting unhealthy air quality conditions in parts of the Upper Peninsula and possibly spreading to the rest of the state, the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) is providing guidance to Michiganders [on how to reduce their risk through its new website](#).

“We want Michigan families to know how to best take precautions to protect their health and safety during air quality events,” said Dr. Natasha Bagdasarian, MDHHS chief medical executive. “Smoke from Canadian wildfires continues to affect air quality across the state. We are urging Michiganders to check the Air Quality Index regularly to decide if they should be participating in outdoor activities and using the website to help determine what actions they should take to keep themselves and their families safe.”

The page, Michigan.gov/wildfiresmokeandhealth, has information on the health effects of wildfire smoke, how to sign up for air quality alerts and how to reduce risk based on the [Air Quality Index \(AQI\)](#).

AQI is a color-coded way for residents to see what the levels of some types of air pollution are in their area. The higher the AQI, the worse the air quality is and the more cause for concern. Live color-coded air quality conditions that indicate if air quality is healthy (green) or unhealthy (yellow, orange, red and purple), along with steps to protect your health, can be found at the [AirNow website](#) and mobile app.

Residents can also sign up for alerts through the [EnviroFlash system](#). This subscriber system allows you to choose the area you would like to get alerts for, and it will send alerts directly to email or send a text message.

The AQI for Saturday is predicted to be unhealthy for sensitive groups (AQI orange) with some areas reaching unhealthy of all individuals (AQI red) in the western and central areas of the Upper Peninsula Saturday. It is possible these levels may move south to the rest of the state Sunday.

MDHHS has also set up a hotline for Michigan residents to ask health-related questions related to air quality issues. The number is 800-648-6942, and is available Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., excluding holidays.

AQI Basics for Ozone and Particle Pollution			
Daily AQI Color	Levels of Concern	Values of Index	Description of Air Quality
Green	Good	0 to 50	Air quality is satisfactory, and air pollution poses little or no risk.
Yellow	Moderate	51 to 100	Air quality is acceptable. However, there may be a risk for some people, particularly those who are unusually sensitive to air pollution.
Orange	Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups	101 to 150	Members of sensitive groups may experience health effects. The general public is less likely to be affected.
Red	Unhealthy	151 to 200	Some members of the general public may experience health effects; members of sensitive groups may experience more serious health effects.
Purple	Very Unhealthy	201 to 300	Health alert: The risk of health effects is increased for everyone.
Maroon	Hazardous	301 and higher	Health warning of emergency conditions: everyone is more likely to be affected.

Anyone can get sick from exposure to wildfire smoke, but some people are more sensitive to particle pollution. Adults aged 65 and older, pregnant people, children, and people with lung and heart conditions may be more likely to get sick if they breathe in wildfire smoke. Symptoms from breathing in particle pollution can include wheezing, coughing and shortness of breath. If you have asthma, follow your asthma control action plan or contact your health care provider if you have symptoms. If you have heart disease and experience these symptoms, contact your health care provider.

The most protective option when air is unhealthy is to stay indoors with air conditioning, reduce strenuous activities and limit outdoor activities. If you must be outside, N95 masks offer enhanced protection when used according to product instructions.

During unhealthy for sensitive groups (AQI orange) to unhealthy for everyone air quality events (AQI red), MDHHS advises the following:

AQI orange

- Everyone can enjoy being outside.
- People living with lung and heart disease, older adults aged 65+, pregnant people, and children should make activities shorter and less intense.

AQI red:

- Everyone should reduce long or intense activities outside.
- People living with lung and heart disease, older adults aged 65+, pregnant people and children are recommended to stay indoors and keep indoor air clean with MERV-13 or better air filtration to prevent breathing harmful particles of wildfire smoke.
- If you are unable to stay inside or you must go outside, consider using a protective N95 mask, especially children and pregnant people. Surgical and cloth masks will not stop you from breathing in the fine particulate matter in wildfire

smoke. If you are unable to stay inside your own house, you can seek a temporary shelter location that has clean indoor air.

Michiganders can also help reduce their contributions to unhealthy air conditions during air quality events through the following actions:

- Do not add to indoor air pollution. Do not burn candles or use gas, propane, woodburning stoves, fireplaces or aerosol sprays. Do not fry or broil meat, smoke tobacco products or vacuum.
- Reduce outdoor air pollution. Reschedule any burning or activities that add dust, smoke and particulate matter to the air, including campfires.
- Reduce vehicle trips and vehicle idling as much as possible and reduce how often you refuel vehicles.

Additional helpful resources:

These resources may be helpful to you if you are looking to learn more about air quality in your area, specifically around wildfires and smoke impacts.

- [US EPA Wildfires and Smoke map](#)
- [US EPA Interactive Map of Air Quality](#)
- [US EPA Fires and your health](#)
- [US EPA Particle Pollution](#)
- [EGLI Air Monitoring Information and interactive map](#)
- [Is burning allowed?](#) and [Michigan.gov/OpenBurning](#)

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