



ATTENTION
Orange County Department of Health

PUBLIC HEALTH ALERT

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PUBLIC HEALTH ALERT #2
Poor Air Quality due to Wildfires

Starting June 6 through June 8, 2023, Orange County is under an Air Quality Health Advisory. Over the next days to weeks, there will be changes in air quality based on weather. However, since the wildfires are still burning, residents should know how to stay healthy as conditions change.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR INDIVIDUALS:

The Air Quality Index (AQI) uses numbers and colors to show health risk levels. See more at <https://www.AirNow.gov> The levels of concern are:

- **Orange (101-150) Unhealthy for sensitive groups.** People sensitive to poor air quality can include children, older adults, pregnant people, outdoor workers, and people with lung or heart disease. These groups should keep time outdoors short and less intense than usual.
- **Red (151-200) Unhealthy.** Anyone may experience health effects. Sensitive groups can have more serious health effects. Everyone should avoid long or strenuous time outside. Sensitive groups should consider staying indoors in air conditioning or filtered air.
- **Purple (201-300) Very unhealthy.** Everyone should stay indoors in air conditioning or filtered air when possible. Avoid exercise and strenuous activity outdoors.
- **Hazardous (301-500) Hazardous.** Avoid all physical activity outdoors. Sensitive groups should keep indoor physical activity low and keep indoor air quality clear.
- **ANY UNHEALTHY LEVEL (150-500 or unknown value)**
 - Stay indoors when possible. Air conditioning or filtered air is best.
 - Avoid outdoor strenuous activity. Take more frequent breaks.
 - Consider a well-fitting N95 mask if you need to be outside for short periods
 - Monitor for symptoms. Call your doctor or seek urgent care for cough, trouble breathing, chest pain, fast heartbeat, or other health concerns.
 - Check Orange County DOH Facebook or NYS DOH Cooling Center Finder to locate air-conditioned cooling centers when indoor temperature is dangerously hot
 - People with asthma or lung disease should have rescue medicine readily available

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SCHOOLS:

Children can be particularly sensitive to poor air quality. Schools are advised to consider action when the Air Quality Index is Orange or higher. <https://www.airnow.gov/sites/default/files/2018-09/air-quality-and-outdoor-activity-guidance-2014.pdf> Schools and parents should work together to identify children who may be most at risk.

- **Orange (101-150) Unhealthy for sensitive groups.** Short activities, like recess and gym, should be safe for most children. For athletic practice or prolonged time outside, take more breaks and do less intense activities.
- **Red (151-200) Unhealthy.** Consider moving activities inside. For any outdoor activities, take more breaks and less intense activities. Consider rescheduling athletic practices and games or moving them indoors.
- **Purple and beyond (201-500) Very unhealthy or Hazardous.** Move all outdoor activities indoors or reschedule.
- **ANY UNHEALTHY LEVEL (150-500 or unknown value)**
 - Stay indoors when possible. Air conditioning or filtered air is best.
 - Take breaks and offer less intense activities.
 - Consider a well-fitting mask to reduce exposure when outside.
 - Monitor students for symptoms and respond as needed.
 - All students with asthma should have updated asthma action plans and rescue medicine available.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR EMPLOYERS:

Consider taking action when **Air Quality Index (AQI) is 150 or higher** with particular attention to vulnerable employees or those sensitive to poor air quality:

- Vulnerable employees include children under 18, people 65 or older, pregnant people, those with heart disease or lung disease, or those with other chronic health conditions.
- Consider assigning work indoors for vulnerable individuals.
- Reduce or avoid strenuous outdoor activities.
- Offer employees well-fitting N95 masks when outdoor work is necessary.
- Consider work from home if travel would expose individuals to poor air quality.

For more information, please call the Orange County Department of Health at (845) 291-2330.