

AIR QUALITY INDEX

Particulate Matter (PM) 2.5 Guidelines for Schools: Modifying Children and Youth Activities

<p>Green: Good (0 - 50)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Everyone can enjoy being outside.
<p>Yellow: Moderate (51 - 100)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children who are unusually sensitive* to air pollution could have symptoms.** Monitor for symptoms during outdoor recess and other physical activities.
<p>Orange: Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups (101 - 150)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limit time children spend outside to 30 minutes or less. Modify activities to reduce exertion and amount of inhaled smoke. Monitor for symptoms** during outdoor recess and other physical activities. Prevent smoke from entering the building by closing windows and minimizing the opening of outside doors. If HVAC systems are not equipped with MERV 13 filters or higher, or if parts of the building are not served by the HVAC system, use portable air cleaners to maintain good indoor air quality. If a wildfire smoke event occurs when it is hot and the school does not have an HVAC system, take steps to reduce solar heat gain, e.g., use shades on windows.***
<p>Red: Unhealthy (151 - 200)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exercise indoors or limit vigorous outdoor activities to a maximum of 15 minutes. Monitor for symptoms** during outdoor recess and other physical activities. Prevent smoke from entering the building by closing windows and minimizing the opening of outside doors. If HVAC systems are not equipped with MERV 13 filters or higher, or if parts of the building are not served by the HVAC system, use portable air cleaners to maintain good indoor air quality. If a wildfire smoke event occurs when it is hot and the school does not have an HVAC system, take steps to reduce solar heat gain, e.g., use shades on windows.*** Children and pregnant people could wear a mask**** for protection while outdoors.
<p>Purple: Very Unhealthy (201 - 300)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cancel all outdoor physical activities or move them inside while keeping exertion minimal. Monitor for symptoms** during physical activities. Prevent smoke from entering the building by closing windows and minimizing the opening of outside doors. If HVAC systems are not equipped with MERV 13 filters or higher, or if parts of the building are not served by the HVAC system, use portable air cleaners to maintain good indoor air quality. If a wildfire smoke event occurs when it is hot and the school does not have an HVAC system, take steps to reduce solar heat gain, e.g., use shades on windows.*** Masks**** are recommended for all people if they must be outside.
<p>Maroon: Hazardous (300 +)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cancel all outdoor physical activities or move them inside while keeping exertion minimal. Monitor for symptoms.** Prevent smoke from entering the building by closing windows and minimizing the opening of outside doors. If HVAC systems are not equipped with MERV 13 filters or higher, or if parts of the building are not served by the HVAC system, use portable air cleaners to maintain good indoor air quality. If a wildfire smoke event occurs when it is hot and the school does not have an HVAC system, take steps to reduce solar heat gain, e.g., use shades on windows.*** Masks**** are recommended for all people if they must be outside.

*Unusually sensitive children may include those with asthma or other respiratory conditions.

**Symptoms could include wheezing, coughing, chest tightness, dizziness, and burning in nose, throat and eyes.

***School operations: Consider closing some schools if it is hot and the buildings don't have air conditioning (making it unsafe to stay inside with windows closed).

****Masks: During a wildfire smoke event, the best place to be is inside with good air quality. If you cannot avoid wildfire smoke, use an N95 or P100 respirator marked with "NIOSH." The respirator should fit tightly, collapse as you breathe in, and not let air in from the sides. If N95 or P100 respirators are not available or do not fit well, properly selected KN95 and KF94 respirators also filter particulate matter. Medical or surgical masks are the least effective option and should only be used as a last resort. Cloth, paper masks and tissues will not filter out wildfire smoke. Do not use masks for children under age 2.

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