

**COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA**

**Dept. of Environmental Protection**

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**Hazardous Air Conditions Persist in South Central and Eastern Pennsylvania Due to Wildfire Smoke**

Residents advised to stay indoors if possible, especially people sensitive to poor air quality

Harrisburg, PA – Residents of South Central and Eastern Pennsylvania are advised to stay indoors due to hazardous air quality conditions caused by smoke from Canadian wildfires. While a large part of the Commonwealth is experiencing smoky conditions, the South Central and Eastern regions are currently most impacted.

“With conditions over much of eastern and central Pennsylvania in the Maroon or Hazardous Air Quality Index, residents should stay inside as much as possible until conditions improve,” said **Acting Secretary of the Department of Environmental Protection Rich Negrin**. “Residents are encouraged to check [www.airnow.gov](http://www.airnow.gov) to see current conditions and the recommendations that go along with those conditions.”

Conditions will likely improve throughout the day, moving the state into the **Code Red Air Quality range for eastern Pennsylvania** and a **Code Orange Air Quality Action Day for western Pennsylvania** for fine particulate matter.

Under **Code Maroon** conditions all residents are advised to stay indoors and reduce activity levels.

Under **Code Purple** conditions all residents should avoid prolonged or heavy outdoor activity. Children, sensitive populations such as older people, those who exercise or work outdoors and those with lung or respiratory conditions such as asthma, emphysema, or bronchitis should avoid all outdoor activity.

Under **Code Red** conditions children, sensitive populations such as older people, those who exercise or work outdoors and those with lung or respiratory conditions such as asthma, emphysema, or bronchitis should avoid prolonged or heavy outdoor activities. Everyone else should limit their outdoor activities

Under **Code Orange** conditions children, sensitive populations such as older people, those who exercise or work outdoors and those with lung or respiratory conditions such as asthma, emphysema, or bronchitis should limit their outdoor activities.

Smoke due to wildfires in eastern Canada will likely contribute to daily average concentrations of fine particulate matter in the **Code Red and Code Orange** range on Thursday.

The weather pattern pushing the smoke from wildfires in eastern Quebec is forecast to continue until Friday for most of Pennsylvania, with conditions improving throughout the day on Thursday. DEP will continue to update the forecast to determine ongoing needs for Air Quality Alerts.

The [U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's \(EPA\) Air Quality Index \(AQI\)](#) provides standardized color codes for forecasting and reporting daily air quality. Green signifies good air quality; Yellow means moderate air quality; Orange represents unhealthy pollution levels for sensitive groups of people; and Red warns of unhealthy pollution levels for all.

An Air Quality Action Day is declared when the AQI is forecasted to be Code Orange or higher. On an Air Quality Action Day, young children, the elderly, and those with respiratory problems, such as asthma, emphysema, and bronchitis, are especially vulnerable to the effects of air pollution and should limit outdoor activities.

Pennsylvanians are encouraged to:

- Avoid strenuous outdoor activities.
- Keep outdoor activities short.
- Consider moving physical activities indoors or rescheduling them.

Tips to help keep particle pollution lower indoors:

- Don't use candles or smoke indoors.
- Keep windows and doors closed.
- If you have an air filter in your home, now is a good time to use it.
- Clean or replace filters according to manufacturer recommendations.
- If you don't have one and want to make your own portable air cleaner designed to reduce particles indoors, the [EPA offers DIY information](#).

Air quality can affect your health, especially people who may be at greater risk, including:

- People with heart disease
- People with lung disease, including asthma and Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD)
- Older adults
- Children and teenagers because their lungs are still developing, and they breathe more air relative to their size
- People who are pregnant

- People who work outdoors

While the impacts in Pennsylvania are from wildfires in Canada, dry and windy conditions here in the Commonwealth increase the risk of wildfires here. People should pay attention to local warnings and avoid burning outdoors. Find more information about [wildfires](#) on the DCNR website.

If you experience symptoms like trouble breathing or dizziness, you should seek medical attention. If you know a family member or neighbor who has one of the above conditions, remember to check in on them.

For more information, visit DEP at [www.ahs.dep.pa.gov/AQPartnersWeb](http://www.ahs.dep.pa.gov/AQPartnersWeb) and EPA's AirNow at [www.airnow.gov](http://www.airnow.gov).

For more information on the [Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection](#), [please visit the website](#) or follow DEP on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), or [LinkedIn](#)