

# STATE OF CONNECTICUT

## DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

Manisha Juthani, MD  
Commissioner



Ned Lamont  
Governor  
Susan Bysiewicz  
Lt. Governor

### Talking Points for Addressing Poor Air Quality

- According to [AirNow](#), the air quality for Wednesday, June 7, most of Connecticut is listed as *Unhealthy* due to wildfire smoke from Canada. This is expected to continue into Thursday as well.
- DPH recommends using [AirNow](#), to see the current and forecasted air quality in your area. [AirNow](#) has an interactive map that shows the air quality and provides additional recommendations for outside activities.
- DPH encourages schools, day care providers, summer camps and elder care/senior centers to subscribe to the [AirNow](#) for real-time updates in their cities/towns. See the charts below for information on school activities and messaging.
- Those with underlying medical conditions, children, and the elderly are considered sensitive populations and are most at risk for experiencing symptoms from elevated air pollution that is expected today and should remain indoors.
- The Connecticut Department of Public Health recommends that people with asthma, and heart and lung conditions avoid outdoor exercise today.
- The health effects from air pollution can include chest tightness, shortness of breath, wheezing, coughing, throat irritation, respiratory tract and eye burning, chest pain, dizziness or lightheadedness, and other symptoms. Asthma symptoms may flare up as well.



Phone: (860) 509-7101 • Fax: (860) 509-7111  
Telecommunications Relay Service 7-1-1  
410 Capitol Avenue, P.O. Box 340308  
Hartford, Connecticut 06134-0308  
[www.ct.gov/dph](http://www.ct.gov/dph)

*Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer*








- We recommend that you avoid any outdoor exercise today if you have lung or heart conditions and seek medical attention if these symptoms worsen.
- Even healthy adults who spend prolonged periods outdoors working or exercising should minimize their outdoor exertion because poor air quality can impact even those not considered vulnerable.
- DPH recommends that those with underlying medical conditions should be sure to have their medications readily available and seek medical attention if these issues worsen.
- As a reminder, wearing a KN95 or N95 is effective at filtering smoke. If you have some at home, consider wearing them while outdoors until the air quality improves.

## Pollutant-Specific Cautionary Statements for the Air Quality Index (AQI)

| AQI Category                          | Ozone (O <sub>3</sub> )  | Fine Particles (PM <sub>2.5</sub> )  | Carbon Monoxide (CO)   | Sulfur Dioxide (SO <sub>2</sub> )   |
|---------------------------------------|--|--|--|---|
| <b>Good</b>                           | None   | None   | None   | None  |
| <b>Moderate</b>                       | Unusually sensitive individuals should consider limiting prolonged outdoor exertion.   | Unusually sensitive people should consider reducing prolonged or heavy exertion.   | None   | None  |
| <b>Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups</b> | Active children and adults, and people with respiratory disease, such as asthma, should limit prolonged outdoor exertion.  | People with respiratory or heart disease, the elderly and children should limit prolonged exertion.  | People with cardiovascular disease, such as angina, should limit heavy exertion and avoid sources of CO, such as heavy traffic.                                | People with asthma should consider reducing exertion outdoors.  |
| <b>Unhealthy</b>                      | Active children and adults, and people with respiratory disease, such as asthma, should avoid prolonged outdoor exertion; everyone else, especially children, should limit prolonged outdoor exertion. | People with respiratory or heart disease, the elderly and children should avoid prolonged exertion; everyone else should limit prolonged exertion.   | People with cardiovascular disease, such as angina, should limit moderate exertion and avoid sources of CO, such as heavy traffic.                             | Children, asthmatics, and people with heart or lung disease should reduce exertion outdoors.  |
| <b>Very Unhealthy</b>                 | Active children and adults, and people with respiratory disease, such as asthma, should avoid all outdoor exertion; everyone else, especially children, should limit outdoor exertion.                 | People with respiratory or heart disease, the elderly and children should avoid any outdoor activity; everyone else should avoid prolonged exertion. | People with cardiovascular disease, such as angina, should avoid exertion and sources of CO, such as heavy traffic.  | Children, asthmatics, and people with heart or lung disease should avoid outdoor exertion. Everyone else should reduce exertion outdoors. |
| <b>Hazardous</b>                      | Everyone should avoid all outdoor exertion.  | Everyone should avoid any outdoor exertion; people with respiratory or heart disease, the elderly and children should remain indoors.                | People with cardiovascular disease, such as angina, should avoid exertion and sources of CO, such as heavy traffic; everyone else should limit heavy exertion. | Children, asthmatics, and people with heart or lung disease should remain indoors. Everyone else should avoid exertion outdoors.          |

## Air Quality and Outdoor Activity Guidance for Schools

Regular physical activity — at least 60 minutes each day — promotes health and fitness. The table below shows when and how to modify outdoor physical activity based on the Air Quality Index. This guidance can help protect the health of all children, including teenagers, who are more sensitive than adults to air pollution. Check the air quality daily at [www.airnow.gov](http://www.airnow.gov).

| Air Quality Index  | Outdoor Activity Guidance   |
|--|---|
|  <p>green</p> <p>GOOD</p>                             | <p>Great day to be active outside!</p>  |
|  <p>yellow</p> <p>MODERATE</p>                        | <p>Good day to be active outside!</p> <p>Students who are unusually sensitive to air pollution could have symptoms.*</p>  |
|  <p>orange</p> <p>UNHEALTHY FOR SENSITIVE GROUPS</p> | <p>It's OK to be active outside, especially for <b>short activities</b> such as recess and physical education (PE).</p> <p>For <b>longer activities</b> such as athletic practice, take more breaks and do less intense activities.</p> <p>Watch for symptoms and take action as needed.*</p> <p>Students with asthma should follow their asthma action plans and keep their quick-relief medicine handy.</p> |
|  <p>red</p> <p>UNHEALTHY</p>                        | <p>For <b>all outdoor activities</b>, take more breaks and do less intense activities.</p> <p>Consider moving <b>longer or more intense activities</b> indoors or rescheduling them to another day or time.</p> <p>Watch for symptoms and take action as needed.*</p> <p>Students with asthma should follow their asthma action plans and keep their quick-relief medicine handy.</p>                         |
|  <p>purple</p> <p>VERY UNHEALTHY</p>                | <p>Move <b>all activities</b> indoors or reschedule them to another day.</p>  |

### **\* Watch for Symptoms**

Air pollution can make asthma symptoms worse and trigger attacks. Symptoms of asthma include coughing, wheezing, difficulty breathing, and chest tightness. Even students who do not have asthma could experience these symptoms.

**If symptoms occur:**

The student might need to take a break, do a less intense activity, stop all activity, go indoors, or use quick-relief medicine as prescribed. If symptoms don't improve, get medical help.