

Public Health Guidance for School Outdoor Activities During Wildfire Events

Check the local Air Quality Index (AQI) online (www.deq.state.or.us/aqi/index.aspx) and do a visual inspection outside.* Compare the AQI and visibility test to determine the air conditions in your community. Then, use the guide below to determine activity level for your students.

Air Quality Index	Visibility Scale	Recess (15 minutes)	P.E. (1 hour)	Athletic Events and Practices (2-3 hours)
Good	Over 15 miles	Great day to be active outdoors!	Great day to be active outdoors!	Great day to be active outdoors!
Moderate	5-15 miles	It is a good day for students to be active outside. Watch students who are unusually sensitive to air pollution for symptoms of shortness of breath or coughing.	Watch students who are unusually sensitive to air pollution for symptoms of shortness of breath or coughing. Monitor symptoms and reduce/cease activity if symptoms arise.	Watch students who are unusually sensitive to air pollution for symptoms of shortness of breath or coughing. Increase rest periods and substitutions for these students as needed. Monitor symptoms and reduce/cease activity if symptoms arise.
Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups	3-5 miles	It is an OK day for students to be active outside. Allow students who are unusually sensitive to air pollution to stay indoors if they'd like.	Move activities for students sensitive to air pollution indoors. Limit other students to light outdoor activities or activities should be moved indoors. Increase rest periods and substitutions. Monitor symptoms and reduce or cease activities if symptoms arise.	Move activities for students sensitive to air pollution indoors. Limit other students to light outdoor activities or activities should be moved indoors. Increase rest periods and substitutions. Monitor symptoms and reduce or cease activities if symptoms arise.
Unhealthy	1-3 miles	Consider keeping all students indoors or allowing only light outdoor activity. Activities for students sensitive to air pollution should be moved indoors.	Move activities for students sensitive to air pollution indoors. Consider moving all activities, and limit all students to light activities. Increase rest periods and substitutions...	Consider cancelling the event, moving the event indoors, postponing the event, or moving the event to an area with "Good" air quality.
Very Unhealthy/ Hazardous	1 mile or less	Keep all students indoors.	Move all activities indoors and limit all students to light activities. Increase rest periods and substitutions.	Cancel the event, move the event indoors, postpone the event, or move the event to an area with "Good" air quality.

*If you get conflicting results when you compare the Air Quality Index to your visual inspection, always err on the side of caution and follow the recommendations for the air quality level that correlates with the worse of the two assessments.

**Students with asthma action plans should follow them closely and monitor breathing and exposure to wildfire smoke. Anyone experiencing symptoms should contact a health care provider for further advice or call 911 in an emergency.

Watch for Symptoms

Wildfire smoke can make asthma symptoms worse and trigger asthma attacks. Symptoms of asthma include coughing, shortness of breath, wheezing, and chest tightness. Even students without known asthma could experience these symptoms when exposed to unhealthy levels of wildfire smoke pollution.

Students with asthma should follow their Asthma Action Plan when determining whether to take special precautions while engaging in outdoor activities. Athletes with asthma should have rescue inhalers readily available and use them as directed by their healthcare provider. Anyone experiencing symptoms should contact a health care provider for further advice or call 911 in an emergency.

Air Quality Index

The Air Quality Index (AQI) tells you how clean or polluted the air is and the associated level of health concern. The AQI categorizes air quality based on air measures that are collected from Department of Environmental Quality air monitors. For more information on AQI in Oregon and how the AQI is calculated, visit Oregon Department of Environmental Quality website: www.deq.state.or.us/aqi/index.aspx.

Children and Air Pollution

Children are particularly sensitive to smoke because their respiratory systems are still developing, their airways are smaller, and they breathe in more air per pound body weight. Children who may be more sensitive to air pollution include those with:

- Asthma
- Respiratory infection
- Lung or heart disease

These individuals should follow health care providers' advice about prevention, treatment of symptoms, and monitor breathing and exposure to

Visibility Scale

In addition to the AQI, you can use personal observations to determine the air conditions in your area. To do a visual inspection:

- Go outside
- Face away from the sun
- Determine the limit of your visible range by looking at objects at known distances (miles). Visible range is the point at which even high contrast objects totally disappear.

School Closures

School closures are the decision of the individual school district, usually in consultation with the local health department. Consult your local health department if you have questions about air pollution and health.

More information

For more information on how wildfire can affect your health, see: <http://public.health.oregon.gov/Preparedness/Prepare/Pages/PrepareForWildfire.aspx>. Consult with your local health department if you have questions about air pollution and health.