

Recommendations for Poor Air Quality Days Air Quality Index (AQI) Chart for Ozone (8-hr standard)

ACTIVITY	0 to 50 GOOD	51 to 100 MODERATE	101 to 150 UNHEALTHY FOR SENSITIVE GROUPS	151 to 200 UNHEALTHY	201 to 300 VERY UNHEALTHY
Outdoor classes, other short duration activities 15 - 60 min	No Restrictions	No Restrictions	Make indoor space available for those with asthma or other respiratory problems.	Any person who complains of difficulty breathing, or who has asthma or other respiratory problems, should be allowed to remain indoors.	Restrict outdoor activities to light to moderate exercise.
Outdoor labs, campus tours, exercise routines, etc. 1-2 hours	No Restrictions	No Restrictions	Make indoor space available for those with asthma or other respiratory problems.	Any person who complains of difficulty breathing, or who has asthma or other respiratory problems, should be allowed to remain indoors.	Restrict outdoor activities to light to moderate exercise not to exceed one hour.
Scheduled Events	No Restrictions	Exceptionally sensitive individuals should limit intense activities.	Individuals with asthma or other respiratory/ cardiovascular illness should be medically managing their condition. Increase rest periods and substitutions to lower breathing rates.	Consideration should be given to rescheduling or relocating event.	Event should be rescheduled or relocated.
Athletic practices, other long duration activities 2 - 4 hours	No Restrictions	Exceptionally sensitive individuals should limit intense activities.	Individuals with asthma or other respiratory/ cardiovascular illness should be medically managing their condition. Increase rest periods and substitutions to lower breathing rates.	Activities over 2 hours should decrease intensity and duration. Add rest breaks or substitutions to lower breathing rates.	Sustained rigorous exercise for more than one hour must be rescheduled, moved indoors or discontinued.

Note: All guidelines are cumulative (left to right and top to bottom) as duration and intensity of activities increase.

HOW TO USE THIS CHART

This chart is for restrictions to outdoor activities affected by ground-level ozone pollution only. It should be used to modify plans for outdoor activities of less than four hours duration, including recess, lunch, and physical education class. Use it in conjunction with air quality forecasts and current ozone conditions. *Other air pollution episodes such as wildfire smoke increase respiratory health risks. In this situation, contact your local Air Quality Management District for air quality conditions.*

The health benefits of regular exercise are well documented. The intent of this chart is to help the community to continue to exercise/work while protecting their health when air quality is poor. Even when air quality is poor, exercise/work can be continued indoors. Indoor air can have 20 – 80% less ozone than outdoor air.

Ground-level ozone (O₃) is an invisible pollutant and a strong irritant that can cause constriction of the airways, forcing the respiratory system to work harder in order to provide oxygen. It can also cause other health problems such as aggravated respiratory disease, damage to the deep portions of the lungs, wheezing, dry throat, headache, nausea, increased fatigue, weakened athletic performance and more.

Long-term exposure to polluted air can have permanent health effects including decreased lung function, possible development of diseases such as asthma and bronchitis, or a shortened life span. Ground-level ozone reaches its highest level during the afternoon and early evening hours. Ozone may reach short-term peaks not reported in U.S. EPA's 8-hr average standard.

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency NAAQS Table (2021)					
Pollutant		Primary/Secondary¹	Averaging Time	Level	Form
Ozone (O₃)		primary and secondary	8 hours	0.070 ppm (2)	Annual fourth-highest daily maximum 8-hour concentration, averaged over 3 years
Particle Pollution (PM)	PM _{2.5}	primary	1 year	12.0 µg/m ³	annual mean, averaged over 3 years
		secondary	1 year	15.0 µg/m ³	annual mean, averaged over 3 years
		primary and secondary	24 hours	35 µg/m ³	98th percentile, averaged over 3 years
	PM ₁₀	primary and secondary	24 hours	150 µg/m ³	Not to be exceeded more than once per year on average over 3 years
Notes:					
1) Primary standards provide public health protection, including protecting the health of "sensitive" populations such as asthmatics, children, and the elderly. Secondary standards provide public welfare protection, including protection against decreased visibility and damage to animals, crops, vegetation, and buildings.					
2) Final rule signed October 1, 2015, and effective December 28, 2015. The previous (2008) O ₃ standards are not revoked and remain in effect for designated areas. Additionally, some areas may have certain continuing implementation obligations under the prior revoked 1-hour (1979) and 8-hour (1997) O ₃ standards.					