

Outdoor Air Quality Guidance

This guidance focuses on evaluating air quality risks, modifying work activities as necessary, and providing appropriate protective equipment when outdoor air quality can deteriorate rapidly due to factors such as wildfire smoke or high ozone levels.

Key Reminders

- **Monitor Air Quality Daily:** Use reliable tools such as [AirNow.gov](https://www.airnow.gov), or the MPCA's [Air Quality Index webpage](#) to assess air quality levels in your area each day.
- **Adjust Outdoor Work When Needed:** If air quality levels are unhealthy, consider modifying work schedules, delaying or postponing non-essential outdoor tasks, or relocating work indoors when feasible.
- **Use appropriate PPE:** If outdoor work must continue during poor air quality, evaluate the need for respiratory protection. If an N95 or other respirator is required, remember that this triggers OSHA requirements, including:
 - Medical evaluation to determine an employee's ability to safely wear a respirator.
 - Fit testing to ensure the respirator provides adequate protection.
 - Training on proper use, care, and limitations of respirators.
 - [Contact](#) your safety representative or your manager for assistance.
- **Support Health and Comfort:** Take frequent breaks in areas with clean air and ensure you have access to drinking water, especially during periods of high temperature.
- **Communicate and Observe:** Discuss air quality concerns with your manager or supervisor and check in regularly. Report symptoms such as coughing, difficulty breathing, dizziness, or eye irritation immediately.

How to Read the Air Quality Index



Resources

- [Air Quality Awareness Flyer](#)
- [AirNow.gov](#)
- MPCA's [Air Quality Index webpage](#)

If you need assistance evaluating conditions, obtaining respirators, or arranging medical evaluations and fit testing, please contact your manager or supervisor.