



CITY OF CHICAGO • OFFICE OF THE MAYOR



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**UPDATE ON CITY OF CHICAGO RESPONSE TO POOR AIR QUALITY DUE TO  
SMOKE FROM CANADIAN WILDFIRES**

**CHICAGO** — Smoke from wildfires in Canada continues to impact air quality in Chicago, which was rated as “very unhealthy” beginning at 11 a.m. Tuesday, according to Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA) air monitors. By midday, the IEPA issued an Air Quality Alert in effect until midnight on Wednesday, with recommendations that all Chicagoans – and particularly sensitive populations, including individuals with heart or lung disease, older adults, pregnant people, and young children – avoid outdoor activities and take precautions to protect themselves from exposure.

The City initiated a comprehensive response, including outreach to vulnerable populations and special precautions such as moving Chicago Park District camps, Chicago Public Schools and other activities indoors where possible. For Chicagoans without access to properly ventilated and safe indoor conditions, please utilize our public libraries, senior centers, Park District facilities, and the Cultural Center or the six community service centers that operate from 9am-5pm:

- Englewood Center – 1140 W. 79th Street
- Garfield Center – 10 S. Kedzie Ave. (24 Hours)
- King Center – 4314 S. Cottage Grove
- North Area Center – 845 W. Wilson Ave.
- South Chicago Center – 8650 S. Commercial Ave.
- Trina Davila Center – 4312 W. North Ave.

These facilities are open to the public for respite. Other critical actions being taken by the City today in response to the air quality conditions include:

- Urging the private sector, members of the public, and City departments to delay, reduce, and/or halt outdoor activities wherever possible.
- Alerting Chicago Housing Authority, delegate agency clients, Department of Family and Support Services Seniors, and Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities clients of the air quality situation and providing helpful safety information.



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- Urging the use of personal protective equipment (PPE), particularly for sensitive populations.
- Making PPE available to vulnerable residents through our street outreach teams.
- Urging employers to allow telecommuting where possible.
- Urging the public and City departments to limit automobile use and refueling.
- Providing 3-1-1 with helpful air quality safety information.
- Utilizing the City's broad communication network, including digital assets, to share information with the public.
- Monitoring 9-1-1 call volume and hospital visits for respiratory related health emergencies.

For the duration of the Air Quality Alert, all individuals, and particularly sensitive populations should:

- Avoid spending time outdoors. If you must go outside, keep outdoor activity short and wear a KN95 or N95 mask while outside.
- Stay indoors and keep your indoor air as clean as possible by not smoking, using candles, or vacuuming.
- Follow your doctor's advice if you have asthma, lung or cardiovascular disease. Some symptoms of breathing smoke include wheezing, chest pain, shortness of breath, and trouble breathing. If your symptoms worsen, call your physician or 911.
- Keep windows and doors closed and turn on your air conditioner if you have one. Seek shelter elsewhere if you do not have an air conditioner and your home is too warm.
- Use an air filter if you have one.
- Limit driving a vehicle if possible.
- Stay tuned to local news media advisories.

To learn more about air quality in our area and monitor for updates from the U.S. EPA, visit [www.AirNow.gov](http://www.AirNow.gov). Residents can also sign up to receive NotifyChicago alerts at [NotifyChicago.org](http://NotifyChicago.org) or download the Chicago OEMC App through the Apple App or Google play stores for public safety tips and alerts.

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