

What You Need to Know: Wildfires and Air Quality Index

What is AQI

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW: WILDFIRES AND AIR QUALITY INDEX

Huge fires, covering millions of acres of land, have been raging in the West Coast of America for weeks. We outlined the impact that the fires are having on air pollution and the inadvertent protection that the current COVID-19 pandemic is providing against these fumes. By wearing masks that can filter out fine particles - which many of us are legally obligated to do at the moment - we are far less likely to be breathing in the harmful toxins produced by this smoke.

Expanding on this principle, we wanted to provide a bit more detail about the correlation between wildfire and AQI. AQI (which stands for the Air Quality Index) is a measurement of an area's air quality. This reading takes place daily and provides key information about the levels of different pollutants in the air.

The [Air Quality Index](#) (AQI) is an index for reporting daily air quality. It simply tells you how clean or polluted the air by dividing it into several categories.

0 to 50	Good	Green
51 to 100	Moderate	Yellow
101 to 150	Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups	Orange
151 to 200	Unhealthy	Red
201 to 300	Very Unhealthy	Purple
301 to 500	Hazardous	Maroon

SOURCE: EPA.GOV

Each category defines a different level of a health concern as shown below:

- "Good" AQI is 0 to 50. Air quality is considered satisfactory, and air pollution poses little or no risk.
- "Moderate" AQI is 51 to 100. Air quality is acceptable; however, for some pollutants, there may be a moderate health concern for a very small number of people. For example, people who are unusually sensitive to ozone may experience respiratory symptoms.
- "Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups" AQI is 101 to 150. Although the general public is not likely to be affected at this AQI range, people with lung disease, older adults and children are at greater risk from exposure to ozone.
- "Unhealthy" AQI is 151 to 200. Everyone may begin to experience some adverse health effects, and members of the sensitive groups may experience more serious effects.
- "Very Unhealthy" AQI is 201 to 300. This would trigger a health alert signifying that everyone may experience more serious health effects.
- "Hazardous" AQI is greater than 300. This would trigger a health warning of emergency conditions. The entire population is more likely to be affected.



HOW TO CHOOSE THE RIGHT MASK DURING A WILDFIRE

Wildfire smoke has 2.5 particulate matter. PM2.5 is a very small particle that can penetrate the lungs, move into your bloodstream, and seriously compromise lung function. Therefore, it's so important to invest in a mask that can filter wildfire smoke out. If you continue to breathe in PM2.5 without a mask, you could experience shortness of breath, nose and throat irritation, excessive coughing, asthma attacks, and reduced lung and heart function.

The Cambridge Mask PRO can fit tightly to your face, filtering out tiny but extremely dangerous PM2.5. It can filter almost 100% of pollution, gases, and 99.6% of viruses, and 99.7% of bacteria. The mask features a Three-Ply Micro Particulate Layer which blocks out particulate pollution including PM2.5. Our Cambridge Mask also filters PM10, PM0.3, protects you from smoke hazards, and COVID-19, enabling you to stay safe during both the pandemic and wildfire.

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