



August 27, 2025

Wildfire Smoke

Good afternoon, Child Care and BASP Colleagues,

As you may be aware, Environment Canada has issued a Special Air Quality Statement for the City of Toronto as a result of wildfire smoke expected over the area today.

Please find below important information about responding to poor air quality that can be used today and, in the weeks ahead, should this occur again. As you'll see below, you can check the current Air Quality Health Index throughout the day in making decisions about outdoor activities. Similar information has also been shared with school Principals.

At risk populations

At risk populations include infants and young children, people involved in strenuous outdoor exercise, and people with an existing illness or chronic health conditions such as diabetes, asthma, and lung or heart conditions.

Symptoms from exposure to smoke

Exposure to smoke most commonly results in milder symptoms such as:

- eye and throat irritation
- cough

- runny nose, and
- headaches.

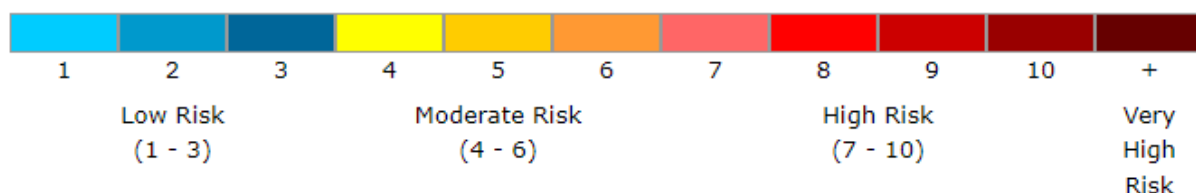
More severe symptoms include:

- dizziness
- chest pains
- difficulty breathing
- wheezing and
- heart palpitations.

Evaluating Outdoor Air Quality

Environment & Climate Change Canada issues special air quality statements and air quality advisories jointly with the Ontario Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks. The Government of Canada's online **Air Quality Health Index (AQHI)** provides current air quality information and forecasts for Toronto, and four sub-locations: Toronto Downtown, Toronto East, Toronto North, and Toronto West. Please see https://weather.gc.ca/airquality/multiStation_e.html?code=onaq-001.

Air Quality Health Index Categories, Values and Associated Colours



You can also receive alert notifications for wildfire smoke or poor air quality events in your area directly by downloading the Government of Canada's **WeatherCAN** app -

<https://www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/weather-general-tools-resources/weathercan.html>.

Deciding on being outdoors versus indoors

When there are reports of the risk for wildfire smoke in Toronto, TDSB schools will check the AQHI for their region throughout the day and decide to either proceed with outdoor recess and activities (**levels 1-6** on the AQHI) or consider moving indoors (**levels 7-10**).

NOTE: Students who wish to stay inside and/or students that are at increased risk of experiencing symptoms will be accommodated.

AQHI levels above 10 are considered very high risk and outdoor physical exertion should be avoided altogether.

When the AQHI indicates that outdoor air quality is higher risk (levels 7 and above) in your area, you may wish to make optimum use of portable HEPA filter units, keep windows closed and minimize the opening and closing of external doors to reduce the infiltration of unfiltered outdoor air into your building.

For further support and guidance, please contact Toronto Public Health.

Sincerely,

Child Care Services

Early Years, Toronto District School Board

Tel: 416-394-7965

ccs@tdsb.on.ca