



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

HKPR District Health Unit Advises Air Quality Health Index Considered Moderate Risk

There is currently no need to modify any usual activities due to the air quality unless one is considered 'at risk'.

Port Hope, ON (June 5, 2023) – The Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge District Health Unit (HKPR District Health Unit) would like to reassure residents of the City of Kawartha Lakes, Haliburton County and Northumberland County that the outdoor air quality health index or 'haze' caused by the ongoing forest fires is considered moderate risk.

Currently forest fires throughout Ontario and Quebec are causing a 'haze' within the region that will continue to occur over the next few days. Public health officials refer to the Government of Canada's [Air Quality Health Index](#) (AQHI) to show the health risk associated with the air pollution we breathe. The following AQHI table is presented on a scale of 1 to 10+ with four health risk categories providing health messages for 'at risk' individuals and the general population.

Health Risk	Air Quality Health Index	Health Messages – At Risk Population ^[2]	Health Messages – General Population
Low	1-3	Enjoy your usual outdoor activities	Ideal air quality for outdoor activities.
Moderate	4-6	Consider reducing or rescheduling strenuous activities outdoors if you are experiencing symptoms.	No need to modify your usual activities unless you experience symptoms such as coughing and throat irritation.
High	7-10	Reduce or reschedule strenuous activities outdoors. Children and the elderly should also take it easy.	Consider reducing or rescheduling strenuous activities outdoors if you experience symptoms such as coughing and throat irritation.
Very High	Above 10	Avoid strenuous activities outdoors. Children and the elderly should also avoid outdoor physical exertion.	Reduce or reschedule strenuous activities outdoors, especially if you experience symptoms such as coughing and throat irritation.

Source: Environment & Climate Change Canada

"The Air Quality Health Index is designed to tell us about the associated health risks caused by local air pollution such as wildfire smoke events that we are seeing today and for the next several days," said Bernie Mayer, Manager of Health Protection for the HKPR District Health Unit. "Currently, we are sitting at a moderate level where the majority of the population does not need to modify any usual activities."

For those considered 'at risk' of health complications due to increased air pollution please:

- Consider reducing your time spent outdoors

- Avoid strenuous activities that could make pre-existing medical conditions worse.

More Public Health Information

The HKPR District Health Unit encourages residents and visitors to follow the Air Quality Health Index by visiting the [AQHI webpage](#), on the [WeatherCan app](#) and on the [Weather Alerts page](#).

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About the Haliburton, Kawartha Pine Ridge District Health Unit

The Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge District Health Unit provides important public health programs and services to residents in Northumberland County, Haliburton County, and the City of Kawartha Lakes. Our dedicated team of public health professionals, led by our Medical Officer of Health, promote healthy living, protect against disease, and prevent illness and injury. We work with health care providers and community partners to address emerging health issues, service gaps and social inequities to support residents in being well and reaching their full potential. Our values of trust, engagement, accountability, and leadership guide what we do every day. Learn more at www.hkpr.on.ca.