

Smog Advisory

Issued at 9:47 AM EDT Monday, May 31, 2010

Environment Canada and the Ontario Ministry of Environment have issued a joint **SMOG ADVISORY** for the Eastern Ontario region. Smoke and haze originating from forest fires over Québec have drifted over Eastern Ontario, causing the air quality index to exceed the “poor quality” threshold of 50 due to fine particulate matter.

While the smog advisory is in effect, strenuous outdoor activities are not recommended as they may cause respiratory symptoms such as coughing or shortness of breath. People most at risk of experiencing respiratory problems include:

- children up to the age of 18
- people who work or exercise outdoors
- pregnant women
- people with allergies
- the elderly
- people with heart problems
- asthmatics
- smokers

Potential health effects include:

- eye, nose and throat irritation
- coughing and wheezing
- worsening of symptoms for those who have lung diseases (e.g. asthma, COPD)
- difficulty breathing
- reduced lung capacity
- lowered resistance to infections
- increased heart and lung conditions
- increase in visits to the emergency room and hospital admissions
- premature death

Higher pollution levels are expected to disperse by Tuesday morning after a frontal passage brings a new air mass to the region.

For more information, please call the Eastern Ontario Health Unit at 613-933-1375 or at 1 800 267-7120 and ask for the Health Line. You can also visit our website at www.eohu.ca.



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