

Air Quality Guidelines

Air Quality Index (AQI) Reference & Recommended Event Actions

Use this guide to assess current air quality conditions and determine the appropriate course of action for your event, based on real-time AQI and PM2.5 readings. Recommendations below, guidance and should be applied alongside local health department alerts and on-site medical staff input.

Sensitive groups — referenced throughout this guide — include children, older adults, pregnant individuals, and people with cardiac or pulmonary disease. These groups face elevated risk at every AQI level above Good.

AQI Range	PM2.5 (µg/m³)	Category	Health Guidance	Competition Recommendation
0–50	0.0–12.0	Good	Poses little to no health risk. Enjoy usual outdoor activities. Windows may be opened to ventilate indoor spaces.	Proceed as normal.
51–100	12.1–35.4	Moderate	Risk of respiratory symptoms for sensitive groups. Sensitive groups should greatly reduce outdoor exercise. Close windows; avoid ventilating with outdoor air.	Proceed as normal but monitor conditions and athletes.
101–150	35.5–55.5	Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups	Everyone at risk for eye, skin, and throat irritation and respiratory problems. General public should greatly reduce outdoor exertion. Sensitive groups should avoid all outdoor activity and consider a pollution mask. Ventilation discouraged; run air purifiers indoors.	Be aware of health effects of smoke and related symptoms, but continue as normal.
151–200	55.6–150.4	Unhealthy	Increased likelihood of heart and lung aggravation and broader public health impacts, particularly for sensitive groups. Everyone should avoid prolonged outdoor exertion and wear a pollution mask outdoors. Ventilation discouraged; run air purifiers.	Consider reducing event length to no longer than 1 hour of activity. Provide a warning to competitors with respiratory issues.
201–300	150.5–250.4	Very Unhealthy	Public noticeably affected. Sensitive groups experience reduced endurance and should remain indoors and limit activity. Everyone should avoid outdoor exercise and wear a pollution mask outdoors. Ventilation discouraged; run air purifiers.	Cancel or postpone the event.
301–500+	250.5+	Hazardous	Everyone at high risk of strong irritation and health effects that could trigger cardiovascular and respiratory illness. Avoid exercise and remain indoors. Ventilation discouraged; run air purifiers.	Cancel or postpone all events and training.

Additional Guidance by Condition

Moderate (Yellow) and above: Close windows and avoid ventilating indoor spaces with outdoor air to prevent outdoor pollution from affecting indoor air quality.

Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups (Orange) and above: Sensitive groups should consider wearing a pollution mask outdoors, and a high-performance air purifier should run indoors if indoor air quality is affected.

Unhealthy (Red) and above: Everyone should avoid outdoor exertion and wear a pollution mask outdoors when unavoidable.

Sources: IQAir — air pollution masks and indoor air quality guidance.