

Frequently Asked Questions

1. How do I keep my school informed on the air quality flag for the day?

- Encourage others to check your school's page on airqualityflags.ca
- If your school is using one of the fabric flags, place it in a high traffic area (beside front entrance, for example)
- Check airhealth.ca
- Morning announcements
- School newsletter
- An Air Quality Flag poster reminds the school community about the importance of air quality

2. How can I find out the daily AQHI report?

Each day, your school page on www.airqualityflags.ca will tell you the AQHI reading for your location. You get to determine which flag to raise and tell your school community what kind of air day it is.

If you want to access the AQHI on your own, go to www.airhealth.ca and click on your location. You can also follow us on twitter [@AirQualityFlags](https://twitter.com/AirQualityFlags)

3. Is air quality affected by weather?

Yes, the air quality can be affected by weather. During the hot summer months and cold winter months there is more opportunity for ozone and pollutants to stay lower to the ground. Wind can have an effect on pollution as well, by spreading it or, from lack of wind, trapping it in one place.

4. What does the AQHI measure?

It measures and reports on a combination of common air pollutants known to harm human health. These are:

- Ozone (O₃) at ground level,
- Particulate Matter (PM_{2.5}/PM₁₀)
- Nitrogen Dioxide (NO₂).

5. How is AQHI data captured?

The AQHI is calculated through readings from an air quality monitor. These monitors are typically located in a residential area and capture air samples throughout the day. Reports are generated on pollution levels and, with the help of a meteorologist; the AQHI is shared with the community on www.airhealth.ca



6. What does it mean to be “at-risk”?

Groups of people who are “at-risk” tend to be more affected from air pollution – individuals with pre-existing respiratory (lung) or cardiovascular (heart and blood) conditions, seniors, people who are frequently active outside, and children. Children are more at risk because they are more active outside, have less developed respiratory systems, and inhale more air per kg of body weight compared to adults.

7. If it’s a blue day?

Everyone is encouraged to enjoy their outdoor activities.

8. If it’s a grey day?

For the general population, there is no need to modify usual outdoor activities unless people are experiencing symptoms. At risk populations might consider reducing or rescheduling strenuous outdoor activities if they are experiencing symptoms.

9. If it’s a brown day?

The general and at-risk populations may consider reducing or rescheduling strenuous activities outside if people are experiencing symptoms.

10. If it’s a red day?

- If the number is high, there are a few different ways to protect health:
- Continue to be active outside but with less physical exertion (walking instead of running).
- Reschedule outdoor activities to a time when the air quality is better.
- People experiencing symptoms may decide to visit the doctor or a health care provider, or take medication to improve breathing.

Have other questions? Post them on our blog at airqualityflags.ca or send an email to Glynn Brothen, Air Quality Flag Program Coordinator, at glynn@airshiftgroup.com

