

Air Quality Code	Meaning
Good	Air quality is considered satisfactory, and air pollution poses little or no concern. Go outside and enjoy the day!
Moderate	There may be a moderate health concern for people who are unusually sensitive to air pollution. Consider limiting prolonged or heavy exertion outdoors.
Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups	Older adults, children, active people and those with heart or lung disease may experience health effects. Limit prolonged or heavy exertion outdoors.
Unhealthy	Older adults, children, active people and those with heart or lung disease may experience more serious health effects. Everyone may experience health effects. Limit prolonged or heavy exertion outdoors.
Very Unhealthy	Everyone is likely to be affected. Avoid all outdoor exertion.



To learn more visit:
www.ncair.org/airawareness/knowthecode

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0 copies of this document were printed at a cost of \$0 or \$0.000 per copy. 03-17-2015

Do You Know The Code?



Learn how air pollution can be harmful to older adults and how to protect your health.



Air Pollution

On average, each person breathes more than 3,000 gallons of air each day. Local air quality affects how you breathe and live and can change daily or even hourly due to pollution. In North Carolina, two of the major types of air pollution are particulate matter and ground-level ozone.

Particulate Matter

Particulate matter (or particle pollution) is a mixture of microscopic solids and liquid droplets suspended in the air. These airborne particles are the main ingredients of haze and smoke. Particulate matter is produced when fuels such as coal, wood or oil are burned.

Ground-level ozone

Ground-level ozone is a highly reactive form of oxygen. It is formed when pollutants emitted by cars, power plants, industrial boilers and other sources react chemically with the presence of sunlight. One of the problems with ozone pollution is that you cannot see it.

Health Effects of Air Pollution

Exposure to particulate matter and ground-level ozone can cause varying health effects. While everyone can be affected by air pollution, older adults can be particularly susceptible to the effects.

Effects of short-term exposure may include:

- Irritation of eyes, nose and throat
- Coughing
- Chest tightness
- Shortness of breath
- Aggravation of asthma or other respiratory diseases

Long-term exposure can reduce lung function and lead to the development of chronic bronchitis.

The longer you are outdoors and the more strenuous your activity will increase your chances of being affected by particulate matter or ozone.

The best way to protect your health is to get the air quality forecast (code) of the air pollution levels in your area and take steps to minimize exposure.

KNOW THE CODE!

The air quality code is forecasted daily and you can get the code in several ways:

- Call the toll free number: 1-800-RU4CAIR(784-6224)
- Visit the DAQ website: www.ncair.org
- Visit the EPA website: www.airnow.gov
- Get emails sent directly to your inbox through www.enviroflash.info
- Download the AirNow app for iPhone or Android

TIPS TO PROTECT YOUR HEALTH

- Plan outdoor activities, for the morning and early evening.
- Adjust when and where you exercise, as ozone pollution tends to be greatest during the hottest parts of the day.
- Reduce an activity that requires heavy exertion to one with moderate exertion (i.e. walk rather than run).
- KNOW THE CODE!
Check the daily air quality forecast (code) when you will be going outside.

