

Pascua Yaqui Tribe Health Services Division

Phone: 520-879-6000 | Address: 7490 S. Camino De Oeste, Tucson, Arizona 85757



For Immediate Release- November 6, 2020

Public Health Alert: Air Quality and the Air Quality Index (AQI)

For more information, contact Melinda Leyva, Environmental Health Technician at 879-5413.

What is Air Pollution and the Air Quality Index (AQI)?

- Hazardous air pollutants are pollutants suspected to cause serious health problems such as cancer. Exposure can make people more susceptible to respiratory infection, result in lung inflammation and aggravate pre-existing respiratory diseases such as asthma. Other effects include decrease in lung function, chest pain and coughing.
- Examples of toxic air pollutants include chemicals emitted from motor vehicles, chemical plants, refineries, factories and other industrial sources.
- The Air Quality Index (AQI) is an index for reporting daily air quality. It tells how clean or polluted the air is, and what associated health effects might be a concern.
- The higher the AQI value, the greater the level of air pollution and the greater the health concern. For example, an AQI value of 50 represents good air quality with little potential to affect public health, while an AQI value over 300 represents hazardous air quality.

What should I do to avoid health risks associated with air pollution?

- Reduce exposure by playing and exercising outdoors before noon.
- Limit vehicle idling when possible by avoiding drive-throughs and excessive idling caused by long wait times making left-hand turns.
- Don't drive during the day.
- Refuel cars and gasoline-powered equipment as late in the day as possible.
- Carpool.
- Combine trips.

Information obtained from Arizona Department of Environmental Quality

Air Quality Index Levels of Health Concern	Numerical Value	Meaning
Good	0 to 50	Air quality is considered satisfactory, and air pollution poses little or no risk.
Moderate	51 to 100	Air quality is acceptable; however, for some pollutants there may be a moderate health concern for a very small number of people who are unusually sensitive to air pollution.
Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups	101 to 150	Members of sensitive groups may experience health effects. The general public is not likely to be affected.
Unhealthy	151 to 200	Everyone may begin to experience health effects; members of sensitive groups may experience more serious health effects.
Very Unhealthy	201 to 300	Health alert: everyone may experience more serious health effects.
Hazardous	301 to 500	Health warnings of emergency conditions. The entire population is more likely to be affected.

Nau te vo'oho'one allae'ewamta vetchivo
Together on the Journey to Health