

NEWS RELEASE | **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE** | May 17, 2023

Department of Environmental Quality urges caution during smoky conditions

BISMARCK, N.D. – The North Dakota Department of Environmental Quality advises residents, especially those with respiratory conditions, to consider limiting prolonged outdoor activities while smoky conditions remain across the state. Wildfires in northwestern Canada are sending smoke across North Dakota.

Extremely small particles of ash and soot, or particulate matter, have been increasing over the last few hours across northwestern North Dakota. Particulate matter can irritate the respiratory system, especially for those who suffer from chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) or conditions such as asthma and allergies. Environmental Quality advises people with respiratory conditions, the elderly and young children to avoid prolonged outdoor exposure.

High particulate numbers, coupled with a weather front moving across the state today will push smoke into the state. People reacting to smoke to the extent that it affects breathing should seek immediate help from a medical provider.

Environmental Quality closely monitors its air sampling network across the state. At this time most of the smoke impact seems to be concentrated in the northwestern part of the state and moving southeast ahead of the weather front. If conditions in central and eastern North Dakota become unfavorable, the department will follow up with additional information.

For up-to-date information on the region's current air quality and respiratory protection tips during a smoke event, visit [fire.airnow.gov](https://www.fire.airnow.gov). The AirNow mobile phone app, and many other weather apps, also include air quality information.

For more information, contact:

Ryan Mills
Division of Air Quality
918 East Divide Ave | Bismarck, ND 58501-1947
PHONE: 701-328-5188 | EMAIL: rmills@nd.gov

www.deq.nd.gov

#