



Maine DEP Issues Air Quality Concerns for June 30 - July 7, 2018

June 29, 2018

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AUGUSTA, June 29, 2018 - A significant heat event has been building and will be impacting the northeast for the next 7 to 8 days. At the same time, conditions will allow precursors to form ozone very efficiently in the region. The air mass will not move out of the region until sometime next weekend.

Maine will not escape some effects of this episode. Currently, Maine DEP Air Quality Meteorologists do not expect that ozone will be unhealthy every day. In fact, Saturday's forecast is for Moderate levels of ozone along the coast from Kittery through Acadia NP and the Western Interior region while Sunday is expected to be Good.

However, even moderate levels of ozone combined with moderate levels of particle pollution in addition to heat and humidity will compound the effects of each. Therefore, individuals should evaluate their health and possible sensitivities and prepare for this event to reduce the likelihood and/or severity of health impacts. It is important to remember that people living in northern climates are less acclimated to heat and therefore can be impacted at lower temperatures. Everyone is encouraged to check the Air Quality Forecast daily during this prolonged episode.

At elevated ozone levels, children, healthy adults who exert themselves, and individuals suffering from a respiratory disease such as asthma, bronchitis or COPD can experience reduced lung function and irritation. When this happens, individuals may notice a shortness of breath, coughing, throat irritation, and/or experience an uncomfortable sensation in their chest.

Some actions you can take to protect your health during periods of unhealthy air quality include:

- Adjusting your schedule to avoid strenuous outdoor activity during the afternoon.

- Please consult the Maine CDC website for information on the health impacts of extreme heat and appropriate actions to take (<http://www.maine.gov/dhhs/mecdc/environmental-health/heat/>).
- The Maine CDC Asthma Prevention and Control Program has asthma information available at their web site: <http://www.maine.gov/dhhs/mecdc/population-health/mat/index.htm>
- For more information on asthma control visit EPA's Web site www.epa.gov/asthma to find information about asthma triggers and lessons on asthma management.

In addition to those in a sensitive group, sports coaches, elder care workers, nurses and others who are responsible for the welfare of people impacted by poor air quality are urged to use one of the listed tools to follow the Air Quality Forecast:

- Air Quality Forecast page: <http://www.maine.gov/dep/air/ozone/> which has links to:
 - EnviroFlash, EPA's email and text alert system, <http://www.maine.gov/dep/air/ozone/enviroflash.html>
 - Twitter, for sign up information go to: <http://www.maine.gov/dep/air/ozone/twitter.html>
 - EPA's mobile app is available at: <http://m.epa.gov/apps/airnow.html>
- DEP's toll free air quality hotline is 1-800-223-1196

For more information call the contacts listed above or go to DEP's air quality web site <http://www.maine.gov/dep/air/ozone/>

<https://www.maine.gov/dep/news/news.html?id=801978>