

Our colleagues at the Vermont Department of Health (VDH) provided the guidance below to support child care, preschool, and afterschool programs, in identifying when to limit or cancel outdoor activities for children when the air quality is bad.

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There have been a lot of wildfires in Canada this summer. On some days, the smoke from the wildfires has made Vermont's air quality bad. The wildfire smoke could cause more bad air quality days this summer and in the future.

To help keep children safe, VDH has developed a guide for you. Use the [Vermont Children and Youth Activities Guide for Air Quality](#) to help you decide when it is okay to do outdoor activities and for how long. You can find this guide and more information on air quality at [www.HealthVermont.gov/AirQuality](http://www.HealthVermont.gov/AirQuality).

**Here is how you can help keep children safe when the air quality is bad:**

- **Check the air quality forecast for the next day.** Air quality forecasts for the next day are usually made available by 4:00 p.m. on [AirNow.gov](http://AirNow.gov). You can also sign up for emergency air quality alerts at [EnviroFlash](#) or [VT-Alert](#) to get email or text alerts. Be sure to check the box next to Air Quality under Health Alerts when choosing your subscriptions for [VT-Alert](#).
- **Use the [Vermont Children and Youth Activities Guide for Air Quality](#)** to help you decide whether to limit or cancel outdoor activities. **VDH recommends canceling outdoor activities or moving them indoors when the air quality is **unhealthy (red)**, **very unhealthy (purple)**, or **hazardous (maroon)**.**
- **Stay informed about the current air quality.** Air quality conditions can change. Be sure to check [AirNow.gov](http://AirNow.gov) to get the current Air Quality Index in your area.
- **Trust your eyes and nose:** If you can see or smell smoke, that means conditions are probably unhealthy. Consider moving activities indoors.
- **Keep indoor air clean, too:** During bad air quality days, it is also important to make sure indoor air is clean. You can find tips on how to keep your indoor air clean on the [Air Quality Alerts, Wildfires & Your Health](#) web page. You can also find information on [how to use HVAC systems or portable air purifiers to improve indoor air quality](#) from the Washington State Department of Health.

## Questions

If you have any questions about this guidance, please email VDH at [PublicHealthTracking@vermont.gov](mailto:PublicHealthTracking@vermont.gov).

The Licenser on Duty (LOD) is also available to support you and your program; you can reach them at [ahs.dcfcdchildcarelicensing@vermont.gov](mailto:ahs.dcfcdchildcarelicensing@vermont.gov) or 800-649-2642 option 3.