

INFO-SMOG

Smog is a yellowish haze that limits visibility in the atmosphere. Smog has a substantial impact on air quality and can have negative health effects.

- In summer, smog occurs on very hot, sunny days. It is composed mostly of fine particles and ozone. In Montréal, pollutants are mainly released by cars and industrial processes. Also, forest fires that occur in summer in Québec cause atmospheric instability likely to result in deteriorating air quality in many regions, including Montréal.
- In winter, smog is caused by a high concentration of fine particles. They are present all year long, but can increase in winter due to wood heating.

There are three categories of air quality forecasts: good, fair and poor. A smog warning is issued for targeted regions when the air quality forecasted is poor.

- To find out about the quality of the air in your area : meteo.gc.ca or montreal.ca.
- The document **Air quality in Montréal** is intended to inform the population of Montréal about the most important air pollutants, their origin and their impact on the Montréal population.

Symptoms

Exposure to smog can cause the following symptoms:

- Itchy eyes and tearing
- Runny nose and sinus irritation
- Sore throat and mild cough
- Headache

The next symptoms are less common but more severe, and could require medical follow-up:

- Shortness of breath
- Wheezing (including asthma attacks)
- Severe cough
- Dizziness
- Chest pain
- Heart palpitations

People concerned about their own or a loved one's health can contact Info-Santé by dialing 811. In case of a medical emergency, call 911.

Protection and prevention

People at risk

SMOG can affect the health of people of all ages, but especially:

- People with asthma
- People with heart or respiratory problems such as emphysema or chronic bronchitis

- Older adults
- Young children
- Pregnant women

To reduce exposure to smog, it is recommended to do the following:

- Stay indoors as much as possible.
- Close the doors and windows of your home.
- Turn off the air exchange system or set it to recirculate to prevent outdoor air from entering into your residence.
- Avoid all outdoor physical activities.

These recommendations can be implemented in educational facilities, daycares and other workplaces.

Instructions for people who must be outdoors:

- Limit your outdoor activities (work, travel or other). Postpone or reduce non-essential tasks.
- See the general recommendations for workplaces. (In French)

To reduce the amount of air pollutants during periods of smog, it is recommended to do the following:

- In summer, take public transportation.
- In winter, take public transportation and avoid using fireplaces and wood-burning stoves.

Help and Resources

[Info-Smog](#) is an air quality forecast and warning program that informs and advises the population when air quality is likely to reach levels that can be harmful to health or to the environment.

The Info-Smog program is produced by Environment Canada in partnership with Ministère de l'Environnement et Lutte contre les changements climatiques, Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux (MSSS) du Québec, Direction régionale de santé publique de Montréal and the City of Montréal.

See also:

- [Environment Canada's Info-Smog Program](#)
- [Air quality index in Montréal – City of Montréal](#)
- [Réseau de surveillance de la qualité de l'air du Québec - Ministère de l'Environnement et Lutte contre les changements climatiques](#)
- [Air quality in Montreal 2023, Direction régionale de santé publique de Montréal \(DRSP\)](#)