



AQHI

AIR QUALITY HEALTH INDEX

What is the Air Quality Health Index (AQHI)?

Canada's Air Quality Health Index (AQHI) was developed to support individuals to make decisions to protect their health, with the primary purpose of providing information on the state of air quality at a specific location.

Why is Scouts Canada using it?

With intense forest fires and an ever-changing climate, Scouts Canada wishes to provide supporting information and resources for everyone regarding air safety.

Why/How do you use the AQHI?

Scouts Canada uses the Government of Canada's **Observed Air Quality Index** and **Air Quality Guidelines** as its two primary resources for making informed decisions around any changes, rescheduling or reduction of its camping/Scouting programs and activities. As conditions change, the Scouter in Charge or Group Commissioner will always make decisions in the best interest of the members and whenever possible, commit to running the camp and activities as scheduled (outdoors).

Air Quality Rating 4-6 (Moderate to Low)

- Programs will run normally.
- Members with pre-existing health conditions or those with health concerns will be given additional rest or water breaks as required.

Air Quality Rating 7-10+ (High)

- Sessions may be rescheduled to a future date, or when possible, moved indoors.
- Programs may continue as scheduled but the program may move to more low impact activities with high exertion or strenuous activities reduced to a safe level.
- Members will be given longer rest and water breaks throughout the activity, and those with pre-existing health conditions (as indicated on their registration form) will be monitored closely.
- Members may choose not to participate in camp activities or withdraw voluntarily.

Health messages for the AQHI

Health Risk: **LOW**

AQHR: 1-3



At Risk Population*

Enjoy your usual outdoor activities.

General Population

Ideal air quality for outdoor activities.

Health Risk: **MODERATE**

AQHR: 4-6



At Risk Population

Consider reducing or rescheduling strenuous activities outdoors if you are experiencing symptoms.

General Population

No need to modify your usual outdoor activities unless you experience symptoms such as coughing and throat irritation.

Health Risk: **HIGH**

AQHR: 7-10



At Risk Population

Reduce or reschedule strenuous activities outdoors. Children and the elderly should also take it easy.

General Population

Consider reducing or rescheduling strenuous activities outdoors if you experience symptoms such as coughing and throat irritation.

Health Risk: **VERY HIGH**

AQHR: ABOVE 10



At Risk Population

Avoid strenuous activities outdoors. Children and the elderly should also avoid outdoor physical exertion.

General Population

Reduce or reschedule strenuous activities outdoors, especially if you experience symptoms such as coughing and throat irritation.

* People with heart or breathing problems are at greater risk. Follow your doctor's usual advice about exercising and managing your condition (Government of Canada, 2015).

AQHI readings are available [online](#) and on the [WeatherCAN app](#) for large urban areas using data from 300 air quality monitoring stations across the country (Government of Canada, 2013). In addition to the current AQHI readings, predicted values for the rest of the day and the day after are available.

