

# A guide to healthy air in your neighborhood

## The Air Quality Index

21

Green means the air quality is good!

58

Yellow means the air quality is OK, but there might be health risks for some individuals with health conditions.

103

Orange means sensitive individuals may experience health effects within 24 hours of exposure.

210

Purple means the risk of bad health effects is increased for everyone. You should limit your exposure.

308

Emergency conditions. Everyone's health is at risk from exposure to the air! Best to stay inside and keep the windows closed.

Burning wood in fireplaces, natural gas burning furnaces and stoves, cigarettes, building materials, and chemical cleaners can all affect the air quality. Polluted air from outside can get inside homes too.

Construction sites can contribute to increased local air pollution through dust and equipment fumes.

The stuff coming out of tailpipes accounts for around 50% of air pollution in Connecticut. Encouraging walking and biking, use of transit, and electric vehicles can all help keep our air cleaner.

When cars and trucks stay in one place with the engine running, they release harmful gasses and particles through their exhaust. Try to avoid standing near cars, buses or trucks when they are still!



This guide provides some information about air quality in your neighborhood. It is part of the *Dwight Healthy and Just* Neighborhood project, which is a joint effort to understand how your neighborhood contributes to your health and wellness, and what kinds of changes can be made to make us all healthier! For more information visit [dwrightneighborhood.info](http://dwrightneighborhood.info), check out the live air quality, and explore other resources about air quality in Dwight.

**What is air pollution?** Air pollution makes the air around us dirty and can

make us sick. You know how sometimes you see smoke coming out of a chimney or trucks leaving behind smelly fumes? Those are kinds of air pollution. Sometimes you can see it, but sometimes it is invisible, and we need scientific monitors to know it is there. Air pollution is made of tiny particles floating in the air that come from many different sources!

**Is air cleaner indoors?** Not always! The air inside your house, car, school, or workplace can be negatively affected by: appliances that burn fuel, cigarettes, cleaning chemicals, building

materials, moisture which creates mold, and even glues used in some types of furniture.

**How do we measure air quality?** Air quality is measured on a scale called the Air Quality Index, or AQI for short. AQI tells us how clean or dirty the air is using numbers, colors, and words. The AQI uses numbers from 0 to 500, which tells us the levels of five air pollutants that are unsafe for people to breathe. The higher the number, the more polluted the air is. Each number of the index is associated with a color on the spectrum from green to maroon. Six colors that

go from green (best air quality) to yellow to orange to red to purple to maroon (worst air quality) are used to describe the air.

### How to check the live air quality in Dwight:

1. Visit: [dwrightneighborhood.info](http://dwrightneighborhood.info)
2. Click "Live Air Quality"
3. Look at the colored circles. Each one represents the location of an air quality monitor.
4. Look for a monitor that is close to where you will be outside.
5. When the circle is green, the air is healthy! Yellow, orange, purple and red mean higher

levels of air pollution. You can also use the number inside the circle, called the Air Quality Index, or AQI for short, to track the level of pollution.

6. Consider what kinds of outdoor activities you, your family, and friends might want to do based on the level of pollution—see the chart above for some guidelines.

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