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PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Williams County Officials Urge Residents to Limit Outdoor Activity Due to Hazardous Air Quality

WILLIAMS COUNTY, OHIO – The Williams County Health Department and Williams County Emergency Management Agency are urging residents to limit time outdoors as smoke from Canadian wildfires continues to affect air quality across Ohio.

The Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (Ohio EPA) has issued an Air Quality Advisory for all of Ohio, with air quality reaching hazardous levels in some areas due to elevated fine particulate matter (PM2.5) from wildfire smoke.

"Smoke from Canadian wildfires is impacting air quality across our region, and current conditions have reached levels considered hazardous to everyone," said Katie Lantzsch, Director of Health Education and Emergency Preparedness for the Williams County Health Department. "We strongly encourage residents to avoid outdoor activities whenever possible and take steps to limit their exposure until air quality improves."

Poor air quality at hazardous levels can affect everyone, regardless of age or health status. Exposure to wildfire smoke may cause eye, nose, and throat irritation, coughing, shortness of breath, headaches, or worsening of existing heart and lung conditions.

"At the current air quality levels, everyone should take precautions to reduce exposure to wildfire smoke," said Nathan Hoffer, Director of Nursing for the Williams County Health Department.

"Children, older adults, pregnant individuals, people with asthma or other lung conditions, those

with heart disease, and individuals who work outdoors may be more likely to experience severe symptoms. We encourage residents to stay indoors as much as possible, keep windows and doors closed, and monitor for symptoms related to smoke exposure."

Residents are encouraged to:

- Check current air quality conditions before spending time outdoors.
- Avoid outdoor activities whenever possible.
- Stay indoors and keep windows and doors closed.
- Use air conditioning on recirculate mode, if available.
- Avoid activities that increase indoor air pollution, such as burning candles, using wood-burning stoves, or vacuuming.
- Seek medical attention if you experience difficulty breathing, chest pain, severe coughing, wheezing, dizziness, or symptoms that do not improve after moving indoors.

The advisory will remain in effect until air quality conditions improve. The Williams County Health Department and Williams County Emergency Management Agency will continue to monitor conditions and provide updates as needed.

Residents can monitor current air quality conditions and forecasts at [AirNow.gov](https://airnow.gov). For additional information, follow the Williams County Health Department on social media or call 419-485-3141.