



Decision making recommendations during wildfire season for

Outdoor Sporting Events

based on visibility and air quality

Health Effect Category*	Visibility†	Recommendation
Good	13.4 miles and up	Hold outdoor sporting events as usual. Athletes with asthma should keep rescue inhalers at hand. Athletes with other smoke related sensitivities should take precautions as symptoms dictate.
Moderate/ Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups	5.1 to 13.3 miles	Hold outdoor sporting events as usual. Athletes with asthma should have rescue inhalers readily available and pretreat before exercise as directed by their healthcare provider. All athletes with respiratory illness should limit outdoor activity, monitor symptoms and reduce/cease activity if symptoms arise.
Unhealthy	2.2 to 5.0 miles	Consider postponing/delaying outdoor sporting events, especially high exertion activities like soccer and track and field. If possible, move athletic practices indoors. If event/practice is held, athletes with asthma or other respiratory illnesses are advised not to participate. All athletes should limit their outdoor activity for prolonged periods of time.
Very Unhealthy	1.3 to 2.1 miles	Consider postponing/delaying all outdoor sporting events. Move all athletic practices indoors. All athletes with asthma and other respiratory illnesses are advised to stay indoors. All others should avoid prolonged exertion outdoors.
Hazardous	1.3 miles or less	Cancel all outdoor sporting events or relocate to an indoor location. Move all athletic practices indoors.

At all times, athletes experiencing respiratory symptoms should consult their personal healthcare provider

*For more information on the health effect categories visit the “Today’s Air” website run by the Department of Environmental Quality at <http://todaysair.mt.gov> Air monitoring stations exist in Billings, Bozeman, Butte, Great Falls, Hamilton, Helena, Kalispell, Libby, Missoula, and West Yellowstone. The Today’s Air website has hourly updates on the health effect category at these sites based on measured particulate matter levels. All other locations must determine the health effect category at their location based on visibility.

† To determine visibility:

1. Face away from the sun
2. Determine the limit of your visible range by looking for targets at known distances
3. Visible range is that point at which even high contrast objects totally disappear

Use the values above to determine the local forest fire smoke category



For more information contact the State Medical Officer
Steven Helgerson, MD, MPH at shelgerson@mt.gov

<http://todaysair.mt.gov>

