

## Orange County: Air Pollution Precautionary Advisory

The Environmental Protection Division of Orange County is issuing an Air Pollution Precaution due to elevated **Particulate Matter of 2.5 micrometers or less (PM2.5)**. This advisory is effective immediately due to the potential for **PM2.5** to reach unhealthy levels for sensitive groups. The PM2.5 Air Quality Index (AQI) levels have been in the moderate range (**51-100**) today and could possibly move into the unhealthy for sensitive groups range (**101-150**) in the next few days based on model projections.

Moderate and Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups AQI values recommend that people sensitive to air pollution and groups that have health effects (elderly, children, people with respiratory disease) should limit their outdoor exposure. The general public should also avoid prolonged exposure outside. The elevated PM2.5 readings are due to dusty air from the Sahara Desert that has traveled across the Atlantic Ocean to Florida where it impacts our air quality each year during the summer months.

Particulate Matter (PM) is one of the US EPA Criteria Air Pollutants and has an established National Ambient Air Quality Standard (NAAQS) based on health criteria. Particulate matter is the term for a mixture of solid particles and liquid droplets found in the air. Particulate matter can be defined as PM10 which are inhalable particles of 10 micrometers and smaller or PM2.5 which are inhalable particles of 2.5 micrometers and smaller. PM2.5 poses the greatest risk to health and can be emitted directly from a source (construction sites, unpaved roads, fires, etc.) or can form in the atmosphere as a result of complex reactions of chemicals such as sulfur dioxide and nitrogen oxides. Additional information regarding Particulate Matter can be found at:

<https://www.epa.gov/pm-pollution>

**This precaution is effective through Friday, 7/12/2024.** If the forecast changes, this advisory may be lifted. If you have any questions or need further information, please call: the Environmental Protection Division, Ambient Air Monitoring, **Regina Gilliland at (407) 836-1484**. For current air quality information, visit [www.airnow.gov](http://www.airnow.gov).