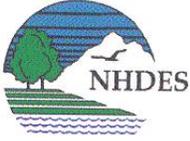


## News from the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services



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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

**DATE:** January 7, 2008

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### **State Declares Air Quality Action Day Unhealthy Air Pollution Levels Predicted to Continue into Tuesday**

Concord, NH – Air pollution concentrations are expected to remain at unhealthy levels in **Cheshire, Hillsborough, and Rockingham counties, and in populated valley areas in southern New Hampshire, through Tuesday, January 8.** State officials are calling for an Air Quality Action Day and advise all individuals in these areas – especially people with heart or lung disease, older adults, and children – to take precautions to protect their health by avoiding prolonged activity. Even healthy individuals may experience mild health effects and should limit strenuous or prolonged activities.

The NH Department of Environmental Services (DES) expects concentrations of **fine particle pollution** to remain unhealthy for sensitive individuals in the above-mentioned regions into January 8. These particles can cause adverse health effects in people with heart or lung disease and may also reduce visibility. **The expected unhealthy particle pollution levels are a result of transport of pollution into New Hampshire from surrounding areas combined with wood smoke from local residential wood burning devices.** These devices produce significant amounts of particle pollution, which can accumulate to unhealthy levels near the source and can concentrate in valley regions under calm wind conditions. Unhealthy air quality conditions should improve late Tuesday into Wednesday when weather patterns are expected to change, bringing in a cleaner air mass.

DES has recently expanded its air monitoring network to include more monitors for fine particle pollution. The continuous, real-time data generated by these monitors allows DES to better track current air quality conditions and forecast when and where unhealthy fine particle levels are likely to occur.

Particle pollution can increase susceptibility to respiratory infections and can aggravate existing heart and lung diseases such as congestive heart failure, coronary artery disease, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, asthma, and bronchitis. When exposed to particle pollution, people with heart disease may experience chest pain, palpitations, shortness of breath, and fatigue. People with existing lung diseases may not be able to breathe as deeply or vigorously as normal and may experience symptoms such as coughing and shortness of breath. The severity of the health effects increases as fine particle concentrations increase.

For further information about potential adverse health effects from particle pollution, contact DES at **(603) 271-4664.** For air quality forecasts and current air pollution levels in New Hampshire, call **1-800-935-SMOG** or visit the DES website at [www.airquality.nh.gov](http://www.airquality.nh.gov).

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