

VISIBILITY RANGE AS A TOOL FOR ESTIMATING AIR QUALITY

Visibility (AQI)	Local Landmark	Level of Health Concern	Visibility Example
<p style="text-align: center;">Visibility >10 miles Good = 0-50</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Slide Mountain</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Air quality is considered satisfactory, and air pollution poses little or no risk</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">Visibility 6 to 10 miles Moderate = 51-100</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Snow Valley Peak</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Air quality is acceptable; however, for some pollutants there may be a moderate health concern for a very small number of people who are unusually sensitive to air pollution.</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">Visibility 3 to 5 miles Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups = 101-150</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Prison Hill</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Members of sensitive groups may experience health effects. The general public is not likely to be affected.</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">Visibility 1.5 to 2.75 miles Unhealthy 151-200</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Mouth of Ash Canyon</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Everyone may begin to experience health effects; members of sensitive groups may experience more serious health effects.</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">Visibility 1 to 1.25 miles Very Unhealthy 201-300</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">C Hill</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Health alert: everyone may experience more serious health effects.</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">Visibility <1 mile Hazardous 301-500</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">No visible landmarks</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Health warnings of emergency conditions. The entire population is more likely to be affected.</p>	



This guidance was developed by the Nevada Division of Environmental Protection Bureau of Air Quality Planning.
The AQI table and visibility conversions were adapted from the "Wildfire Smoke: A Guide for Public Health Officials" (Rev. July 2008 with 2012 AQI updates).



VISIBILITY TOOL FOR ESTIMATING AIR QUALITY - GUIDANCE

The Nevada Division of Environmental Protection does not operate continuous air quality monitoring in all Nevada communities. In areas that do not have monitors, visibility can serve as a quick way to estimate air quality during times of elevated smoke or dust levels. The attached visibility table can be used to estimate the air quality index (AQI). The AQI is an index for reporting daily air quality. It indicates how clean or polluted the air is, and what the associated health effects might be. Higher AQI values indicate higher levels of air pollution, which correspond to greater health concerns. For more information about the AQI visit <https://www.airnow.gov/>.

The attached visibility table can be used to estimate the air quality in your area; make sure to take the following steps:

- Face away from the sun;
- Determine the limit of your visibility range by looking at something at a known distance (miles). The visibility range is the point at which even high-contrast objects (e.g. a dark mountain against the sky at noon) totally disappear;
- After determining the visibility in miles, use the table to identify the level of health concern and the associated protective actions recommended.

As a general rule of thumb, if you can see and/or smell smoke or dust, you may be at risk for exposure to unhealthy levels of particulate matter. The more smoke or dust you see and smell, the more unhealthy your exposure. When air quality is poor, stay indoors and reduce levels of outdoor activity.

Smoky or dusty conditions can be unhealthy, especially for sensitive groups, which include young children, the elderly, those with heart conditions, and anyone with respiratory ailments such as asthma, emphysema, and bronchitis. Although all residents should use common sense to reduce exposure to unhealthy levels of smoke and dust, members of sensitive groups in particular are urged to take precautions whenever smoke or dust is present.

Keep in mind that air quality can change rapidly at different times during the day, depending on fire and wind conditions. It is important to monitor smoke or dust levels in your area throughout the day and make outdoor plans accordingly. Air quality is expected to be affected in localized areas until the wildfire is under control and extinguished or the wind event is over.

Please contact a member of the Nevada Division of Environmental Protection Bureau of Air Quality Planning Ambient Air Monitoring Group with any air quality questions (775) 687-9349. If you have questions about your health, please contact your local health department and/or your health care provider.



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