



## Fact Sheet: Moody Landfill Fire

We take the air we breathe for granted. Did you know that air pollution is the world's #1 environmental health risk? Air pollution refers to airborne particles that are released into the ambient air. It can result from burning fossil fuels, wildfires, volcanos, internal combustion engines, windstorms, etc. Some air pollution is manmade, and some air pollution occurs naturally.

### Who Is Most at Risk?

- People with preexisting health conditions, including COPD, asthma, heart disease, and diabetes
- Infants, children, and teenagers
- Older adults (e.g., 65+)
- Pregnant women
- People who work outside

### Common Symptoms of Exposure to Air Pollution

- Respiratory issues (coughing, wheezing)
- Headaches
- Sore throat
- Nausea
- Nose bleeds
- Changes in appetite
- Sleep difficulty
- Burning eyes

**National Ambient Air Quality Standards.** The National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS, pronounced "naks") cover ambient air concentrations of the following pollutants: carbon monoxide (CO), nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>), sulfur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>), particulate matter (PM), ground-level ozone (O<sub>3</sub>), and lead.

**Hazardous Air Pollutants.** In addition to criteria pollutants, the Clean Air Act also regulates a category of pollutants called "hazardous air pollutants," or HAPs. These are also referred to as "air toxics." HAPs are pollutants that are known (or suspected, based on ample scientific evidence) to cause cancer and other severe health problems. Testing for HAPs requires collecting samples of ambient air and sending those samples to a lab for analysis.

AQI Color	Level of Concern	AQI Value	Description of Air Quality
Green	Good	0 to 50	Air quality is satisfactory, and air pollution poses little or no risk.
Yellow	Moderate	51 to 100	Air quality is acceptable. However, there may be a risk for some people, particularly those who are unusually sensitive to air pollution.
Orange	Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups	101 to 150	Members of sensitive groups may experience health effects. The general public is less likely to be affected.
Red	Unhealthy	151 to 200	Some members of the general public may experience health effects; members of sensitive groups may experience more serious health effects.
Purple	Very Unhealthy	201 to 300	Health alert: The risk of health effects is increased for everyone.
Maroon	Hazardous	301+	Health warning of emergency conditions: everyone is more likely to be affected.

**Air Quality Index (AQI).** Each pollutant has its own range based on the national ambient air quality standards – or NAAQS. The Clean Air Act requires NAAQS to be reviewed every five years to ensure they're based on the latest scientific information. The AQI's color categories range from green (good) to maroon (hazardous). Visit [gaspgroup.org/air-quality](http://gaspgroup.org/air-quality) for more details.

**Landfill Fire Pollution.** Landfill fires consist primarily of smoke, which is particulate matter. That particulate matter can also contain volatile organic compounds, including hazardous air pollutants. The makeup of the smoke depends on the fuels being burned (e.g., foliage, tires, telephone poles, etc.). The odor, volume, and intensity of smoke depends on many factors, including wind direction and strength.

**Air Monitoring.** Through our AirKeeper program, GASP uses PurpleAir digital sensors to monitor PM pollution at the hyperlocal level. GASP will install strategically placed PurpleAir monitors free of charge. These devices require an outdoor outlet, reliable Wi-Fi access, and a place to mount the sensor (using a screw or zip ties). High-priority locations include homes near the fire, schools, senior centers, churches, and community centers. GASP has thus far deployed four PurpleAir sensors near the fire and in locations impacted by the pollution. To determine the makeup of the particles, we will need to collect ambient air samples and send them off for lab analysis.

**Reporting Air Pollution Complaints.** In St. Clair County, residents can submit complaints to the Alabama Department of Environmental Management (ADEM) online at [adem.alabama.gov](http://adem.alabama.gov). Despite what you may have heard, ADEM has a duty to monitor air pollution due to emergencies like the fire in St. Clair County. Reporting your complaints to ADEM is an essential step. Visit [gaspgroup.org/airwatch](http://gaspgroup.org/airwatch) to tell us about your air pollution concerns!