

# OpenVoiceNews U.S.

Transparent. Unbiased. Yours.

## Canadian Wildfire Smoke Triggers Hazardous Air Conditions Across Midwest Cities

August 1, 2025

Categories: Breaking News



Download IPFS

Smoke from ongoing wildfires in Canada's northwestern provinces has once again pushed into the upper Midwest of the United States, plunging major cities like Chicago and Minneapolis into dangerously poor air quality. According to data from IQAir, these urban centers briefly registered among the worst air quality levels in the world Thursday morning, as smoke drifted southward from wildfires in Saskatchewan, Alberta, and Manitoba.

Northerly winds carried the smoke into Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Michigan early Thursday, triggering Air Quality Alerts across multiple states, including Iowa, Missouri, Illinois, and northern Indiana. The alerts now affect more than 100 million Americans, with health officials urging residents in impacted areas to limit time outdoors.

Wisconsin has seen some of the most severe effects, with air quality readings in several cities reaching the "very unhealthy" category. By late Thursday morning, six of the ten worst air quality readings in the U.S. were located in Wisconsin alone. Minneapolis and Chicago, two of the Midwest's largest cities, ranked among the top three globally for worst air quality levels as of 11:30 a.m. Central Time.

The "very unhealthy" air quality designation signifies that even healthy individuals may begin to experience adverse health effects after brief exposure. Those with existing respiratory or cardiovascular conditions are particularly at risk.

The FOX Forecast Center projected that smoke would continue to drift southward Friday, further affecting areas of Illinois, Missouri, and parts of the interior Northeast. Alongside health risks, the thick haze may reduce visibility in some regions, potentially complicating travel conditions.

Officials expect a modest improvement in air quality across Minnesota and Wisconsin by Saturday as weather conditions shift. However, the long-burning fires in Canada, which have persisted throughout the summer, continue to pose a recurring threat. Just last week, similar plumes of wildfire smoke impacted the Northeast, with air quality alerts issued in metropolitan areas such as New York City and Boston.

The Canadian wildfires underscore the growing cross-border environmental impact of large-scale blazes, with experts and emergency planners calling for better air monitoring and response coordination. As seasonal fires become more frequent and intense, air quality concerns are expected to remain a persistent public health issue in affected regions.