



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Wildfire smoke contributes to air quality exceedances in May

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Des Moines, IA – The Air Quality Bureau has recorded 33 exceedances of the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) over the last 14 days. Smoke from wildfires in Northern Canada contributed to 32 ozone exceedances and one fine particulate matter (PM2.5) exceedance between May 18th and May 31st. Iowa has averaged less than four ozone exceedances per year over the last five years. These exceedances are the first of the NAAQS measured in Iowa this year.

Between May 18th and May 31st, 32 exceedances of the eight-hour ozone NAAQS were measured across Iowa. The locations and number of exceedances were: Clinton (3), Coggon (4), Davenport (2), Emmetsburg (4), Pisgah (6), Cedar Rapids (4), Scott County Park (5), and Waverly (4). The days with the highest ozone exceedances were May 23, 24, and 29; six exceedances occurred each day.

All 32 ozone exceedances were at a concentration level that EPA defines as “unhealthy for sensitive groups.” Groups sensitive to ozone include people with lung diseases such as asthma, older adults, children and teenagers, and people who are active outdoors.

An exceedance of the NAAQS for fine particulate matter was also recorded at Emmetsburg on May 18. The national standard for fine particulate matter is 35 micrograms per cubic meter ($\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$) averaged over a 24-hour period, and the 24-hour average at Emmetsburg on that day was 46.7 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$. This level is considered “unhealthy for sensitive groups.” Groups sensitive to particulate matter include people with heart or lung disease, older adults, children and teenagers, and outdoor workers.

Wildfire smoke carries large amounts of particulates and gases that may act as ozone precursors and can lead to exceedances of the NAAQS for both fine particulate matter and ozone. Smoke is lofted high into the air by the heat produced and can be transported by winds far from its origin. The smoke will cool depending on the current weather conditions and may rapidly descend or remain aloft. Air quality will be negatively impacted if it descends and reaches the surface.

Smoke from wildfires in Canada impacted Iowa beginning on May 18, with lingering influences extending to the end of the month. Intermittent and patchy smoke episodes are possible as long as the wildfires remain out of control.

Real-time air quality maps and information about the air quality index can be found on EPA's [airnow.gov](https://www.airnow.gov) site. A graphic approximation of the extent and trajectory of the smoke plume can be seen on the map at [fire.airnow.gov](https://www.airnow.gov). EPA's specific guidelines on what precautions can be taken to minimize the impact of high ozone and fine particulate levels are available at <https://www.airnow.gov/publications/activity-guides-publications/>. Generally speaking, they involve limiting outdoor activities, especially prolonged outdoor exertion.

DNR enforcement actions

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or Tamara.McIntosh@dnr.iowa.gov.

DES MOINES – DNR staff work with individuals, businesses and communities to help them protect our natural resources by complying with state and federal laws. This approach is very effective. In the few cases where compliance cannot be achieved, the DNR issues enforcement actions. The following list summarizes recent enforcement actions. Find the entire, original orders on DNR's website at www.iowadnr.gov/EnforcementActions

Consent Orders A consent order is issued as an alternative to issuing an administrative order. A consent order indicates that the DNR has voluntarily entered into a legally enforceable agreement with the other party.

Polk County

Archer-Daniels-Midland Company

Initiate construction and comply with the construction permit's compliance schedule; conduct two stack tests this year - one in the summer and one in the fall; comply with approved National Ambient Air Quality Standards modeling; submit quarterly progress reports; submit amended Emission Inventories for 2017 through 2022 and pay associated unreported emission fees; submit a supplemental Title V permit application; submit permit application to Polk County Public Works - Air Quality Division; and pay a \$10,000 administrative penalty.

Polk County

Archer-Daniels-Midland Company

Initiate construction and comply with the construction permit's compliance schedule; comply with the Emissions Minimization Plan; submit quarterly progress reports until compliance is achieved with the 0.140 gal/ton VOC emission limit based on a twelve-month rolling average; submit amended Emission Inventories for 2017 through 2022 and pay associated unreported emission fees; submit permit application to Polk County Public Works - Air Quality Division; and pay a \$10,000 administrative penalty.

Polk County

Brad Moeckly

Pay a \$1,000 administrative penalty.

Air Quality permits under review

MEDIA CONTACT: Peter Zayudis, DNR, at 515-201-4596

or Peter.Zayudis@dnr.iowa.gov for Construction permits.

DES MOINES – The DNR Air Quality Bureau has the following draft permits up for review. The permits help protect Iowans' health and the air where we live. DNR's permitting staff review the applications to ensure facilities comply with state and federal air quality standards. The public has the right and is encouraged to comment on draft permits. DNR considers [public comments](#) before finalizing the permits. Submit comments in writing to the assigned permit writer before 4:30 p.m. on the last day of the comment period.

Construction Permits

DNR engineers review and issue construction permits to facilities before they build new or modify existing sources of air pollution. The public may review the following air quality construction permits available online at www.iowadnr.gov/airpermitsearch OR through the [EASY Air Public Inquiry Portal](#) and then click the Public Notice tab.

Muscatine County Grain Processing Corporation – 1600 Oregon St., Muscatine. Project No. 23-023, Emission Point 323.0: The purpose of this project is to install a new scrubber and thermal oxidizer to control emissions from existing tanks, centrifuges and conveyors in Dryer House 4. This equipment is collectively identified as the Dryer House 4 Building Aspiration System, and it will exhaust out emission point EP323.0.

The public comment period ends July 1.

Project No. 23-088, Emission Point 311.0: The purpose of this project is to remove the Dryer House 4 Building Aspiration System from emission point EP311.0. EP311.0 will now only exhaust three rotary dryers.

The public comment period ends July 1.