

# FIRE IN SHOREWOOD FAST FACTS

THE US ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY [USEPA] IS ACTIVELY USING 20 SITES NEAR THE LOCATION OF THE FIRE IN SHOREWOOD TO TEST THE AIR QUALITY.

USEPA HAS BEEN MONITORING THE AIR QUALITY SINCE APPROXIMATELY 6PM, TUESDAY, JULY 19.

**THE RESULTS OF USEPA TESTING SO FAR INDICATE THAT THE AIR QUALITY DOES NOT PRESENT A PUBLIC HEALTH CONCERN.**

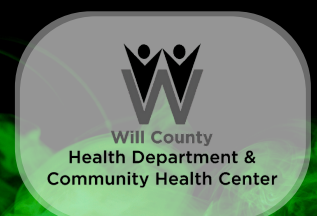
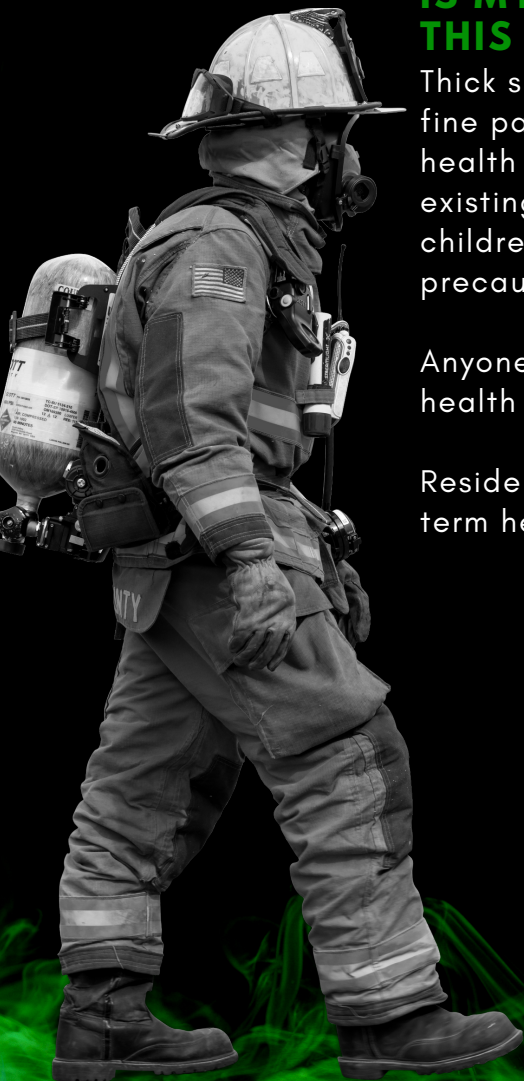
## FAQS

### IS MY HEALTH AT RISK FROM INHALING SMOKE FROM THIS FIRE?

Thick smoke from the Shorewood warehouse fire contained high levels of fine particulate material [PM]. Exposure to high levels of PM may cause health problems for sensitive individuals, particularly people who have pre-existing heart or lung problems, such as asthma. PM can also affect young children and the elderly. Therefore, sensitive individuals should take precautions to avoid areas where there is visible smoke.

Anyone who may have been exposed to the smoke and is experiencing health problems should contact their medical provider.

Residents who were exposed to smoke from the fire may experience short term health effects, including eye, nose, or throat irritation and coughing.



# FAQS

## WHAT CHEMICALS ARE IN THE SMOKE?

The United States Environmental Protection Agency [USEPA] started air monitoring at approximately 6:00 PM on July 19, 2022, and are actively monitoring and sampling the air to determine the chemicals that may be present in the smoke.

Based on current information, the main concern is the inhalation of fine particulate matter [PM] in the smoke. In addition to PM, agencies are monitoring for other chemical compounds, but **there are no concerns identified with other compounds at this time.**

Any additional information from air monitoring activity will be used to inform updated recommendations to the public.

## WHAT ACTIONS SHOULD I TAKE WHEN OUTDOORS WHERE THERE IS SMOKE?

Stay indoors and avoid outdoor activities in smoky areas when possible.

Wear a well-fitting disposable N95 mask (or better) during cleanup to avoid breathing airborne particles. A cloth mask does not provide the same level of protection.

Wear gloves and wash your hands with soap and water after cleaning up outdoors.

Take off your shoes when you go inside and leave outdoor shoes in the garage so that you don't track particles indoors. Heavily soiled clothes should be washed separately.

## HOW DO I PROTECT MYSELF IF I HAVE TO CLEAN SURFACES?

Wear protective clothing when cleaning surfaces that may have been soiled by particulate material from the fire. When cleaning, wear gloves and, if available, a N95 or KN95 mask to protect yourself from inhaling particles.

## HOW CAN I CLEAN INDOOR & OUTDOOR SURFACES?

Clean interior floors and upholstery with a HEPA filter vacuum cleaner.

Hard, smooth surfaces like tile floors and countertops can be wiped down with soapy water and rinsed.

Use soap and water to clean toys, swing-sets, patio furniture, grills, pet toys, cars, etc.

To clean swimming pools, recirculate through the filters and perform routine pool maintenance.



# FAQS



## HOW DO I ADDRESS POTENTIAL IMPACTS TO MY CENTRAL AIR CONDITIONER OR FURNACE?

Clean or replace your furnace filter to ensure that it is working efficiently and effectively.

When removing or cleaning air filters, wear a mask and gloves. Once you've installed a new filter, turn on the system's "fan" or "recirculate" option to circulate the air in your home.

A furnace filter with a MERV rating of 11 or 13 will do a better job capturing fine particulate matter than less expensive filters.

If you have a window air conditioner, close the outdoor air damper.

A portable air cleaner with a HEPA filter can also reduce exposure to any particulate matter that might migrate indoors.

## IS DRINKING WATER AT RISK?

The fire is not expected to impact city water. The nearest community water supply well is approximately 2 miles away.

Private well users who live nearby should contact the Environmental Health Division of the Will County Health Department at 815. 727.8490 for guidance if they have concerns.

## ARE GARDEN VEGETABLES SAFE TO EAT?

Homegrown fruits and vegetables can be safely consumed after thoroughly washing and rinsing. Discard the outer leaves of greens before washing. Peel all root vegetables which were in direct contact with soil.

**IF YOU HAVE ANY ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS,  
PLEASE REACH OUT TO**

**ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH**  
**630.293.6800 or DPH.Tox@illinois.gov**

**WILL COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT**  
**email: info@willcountyhealth.org**

## ADDITIONAL HEALTH RELATED RESOURCES

Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR)

- **Community Stress Resource** <https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/stress/index.html>
- **Environmental Odors General Information**  
[https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/odors/general\\_info.html](https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/odors/general_info.html)

**Illinois Poison Center** 1-800-222-1222 or <https://www.illinoispoisoncenter.org/>  
**Pediatric Environmental Health Specialty Units** <https://www.pehsu.net/region5.html>

