

FOREST FIRES: POTENTIAL POOR AIR QUALITY ON THE NORTH SHORE UNTIL SATURDAY

Baie-Comeau, June 21, 2023 – Due to the presence of several forest fires in Quebec, there may be large amounts of smoke on the North Shore intermittently until Saturday.

During this period, air quality may be poor. The smoke plume may have impacts on health, especially for those at risk, including children, pregnant women, seniors, people with asthma, people with heart problems and people who already have respiratory diseases such as emphysema and chronic bronchitis.

The Direction de santé publique de la Côte-Nord recommends that the population reduce its exposure to the smoke from forest fires by:

- Staying indoors;
- Closing the windows of homes and living environments, including childcare services, schools and workplaces;
- Limiting air exchange with the outdoors, for example by turning off the air exchange system or using recirculation mode;
- Limiting your outdoor activities, especially if they cause fatigue or shortness of breath;
- Avoiding any intense physical activity outdoors;
- Checking in on your loved ones who are vulnerable.

Moreover, in the current context of high exposure or when people need to stay outdoors temporarily, wearing an N95 mask can be a complementary protection measure for adults in addition to those mentioned above, which are considered more effective during forest fires. However, the mask must be properly fitted to the face.

The CISSS will make N95 masks available for vulnerable people who must go outdoors and workers who work outdoors. To learn more about the distribution locations on the territory, consult the “Feux de forêt” tab on the website of the CISSS de la Côte-Nord: <https://www.ciass-cotenord.gouv.qc.ca/sante-publique/feux-de-foret/>.

If some discomfort persists or increases despite these measures, it is advisable to consult Info-santé at 811. In case of emergency, call 911.

We are continuously monitoring air quality, and updates will be issued as required.

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