 Ontario

Ministry of the
Environment

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What is an Air Quality Forecast?

An Air Quality Forecast is a prediction of the quality of the air in the future.

The Ministry wants to give Ontario residents as much notice as possible if it looks as though a smog day is on the way. So the Ministry will issue a 3-day outlook or a smog prediction for today, tomorrow and the third day. Since smog days are tied to weather, our meteorologists keep a close watch on short and long-range weather forecasts, and continually study air quality information concerning Ontario and neighbouring U.S. states.

Air quality forecasts are issued in three descriptive categories

- **Good** means the Air Quality Index (AQI) reading is expected to range from 0 to 31.

- **Moderate** means the AQI reading may range from 32 to 49

- **Poor** means the AQI reading may be over 50. If a poor rating is predicted then a **Smog Alert** is issued.

There are two kinds of **Smog Alerts** that could be called. When there is a 50 per cent chance of a smog day, a **Smog Watch** up to three days in advance is called. When there is a strong likelihood that a smog day is coming within 24 hours, a **Smog Advisory** is called. If a smog day has happened without warning and weather conditions conducive to elevated smog are forecast to continue for six hours, then a smog advisory will be issued immediately.

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