

Public Health Advisory

Iqaluit dump fire Public Health update

July 31, 2014 Iqaluit, NU

Since June 14, 2014, Iqaluit's air quality has been monitored in relation to the dump fire. Conditions in Iqaluit remain unchanged; this advisory reflects the most up-to-date information, with monitoring results up to July 28, 2014.

To date, the data collected has shown that most air pollution concentrations, such as fine particulate matter, ozone, nitrogen oxides, sulphur oxides, associated metals, volatile organic compounds (VOCs), and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) - have been low and do not pose a risk to public health.

The latest results indicate that the average levels of dioxins and furans continue to exceed the ambient air quality standard set by Ontario. The standard is considered to be very conservative (protective of human health).

The following people should limit their exposure to dump fire smoke: those with heart or lung disease or asthma, as well as the elderly, children, pregnant women and women who may become pregnant. Exposure to dump fire smoke can be limited by staying indoors with the doors and windows closed, and, with air exchangers set to re-circulate indoor air or turned off. Reduce or reschedule outdoor physical activity. People should seek medical attention if they have symptoms such as trouble breathing or tightness in the chest.

The Government of Nunavut is working closely with Environment Canada and Health Canada to monitor the dump fire and air quality, and continues to provide logistical and administrative support, as well as specialized equipment, to the City of Iqaluit.

For more information see the Q and As on the Department of Health's website: http://gov.nu.ca/health.

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