

Air Quality



Cancer & Environment Network
of Southwestern Pennsylvania



Common indoor air pollutants include:

- Tobacco smoke (including e-cigarettes or “vaping”)
- Mold and mildew
- Dust mites and cockroaches
- Volatile organic compounds (VOCs), including:
 - Chemicals such as formaldehyde, styrene and benzene, among others
- Flame retardant chemicals
- Chemicals in fragrances, such as phthalates

Common outdoor air pollutants include:

- Emissions from cars, buses, trucks, ships, and trains
- Smoke from wildfires
- Industrial facilities
- Smoking or campfires

To protect yourself from both indoor and outdoor air pollutants and contribute to clean air in your community:

- Close windows during heavy traffic.
- Maintain a working HVAC system.
- Consider using a portable indoor air cleaner.
- Avoid exercising near heavy traffic areas.
- Minimize outdoor activities when pollution levels are high.
 - Check the daily air quality index (AQI). The AQI classifies air quality to help indicate if it is reaching unhealthy levels.
- Call on government officials and businesses to protect public health, comply with all air pollution laws, and commit to pollution reduction via safer technologies.

For more information, visit the following:

- [Cancer and the Environment of Southwestern Pennsylvania, Chemical Fact Sheet: VOCs](#)
- [Cancer and the Environment of Southwestern Pennsylvania, Chemical Fact Sheet: Particulate Matter](#)
- [Cancer and the Environment of Southwestern Pennsylvania: Ventilation Fact Sheet](#)