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Fireworks and Wildfires Impact Utah's Air Quality

SALT LAKE CITY – Fireworks bursting in the air may be a patriotic celebration of Independence Day, but the Utah Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) cautions Utahns that it does lead to poor air quality.

DEQ's Division of Air Quality (DAQ) has monitored extremely high concentrations of particulate matter (PM) pollution associated with wildfires and fireworks—an unwelcome addition to the summertime ozone pollution.

“Every year we see significant spikes in particulate matter concentrations on July 4th and Pioneer Day,” said Bryce Bird, air quality director. “These spikes are mostly related to the smaller, neighborhood fireworks and barbecues. Exceptional events like wildfires and fireworks on holidays can make our air quality much worse – a fact that we hope people will take into consideration when planning their holiday parties.”

Those most affected by the particulate matter pollution are children, the elderly and sensitive individuals with respiratory conditions. DAQ recommends those individuals who might find these celebrations more troublesome than fun avoid such areas directly, or at least view them from a safe distance. It is also recommended that those who are particularly sensitive stay indoors (especially during the evening) and close the windows, so that indoor air is not impacted.

To help residents plan ahead and adjust their activities during periods of high pollution, DAQ provides hourly air quality monitoring through its UtahAir app and website, airquality.utah.gov.

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About DEQ

Established in 1991, the Utah Department of Environmental Quality's (DEQ) mission is to safeguard and improve Utah's air, land and water through balanced regulation. DEQ implements state and federal environmental laws and works with individuals, community groups and businesses to protect the quality of Utah's air, land and water. For more information, visit www.deq.utah.gov, follow DEQ on Facebook ([utahdeq](https://www.facebook.com/utahdeq)) and Twitter ([UtahDEQ](https://twitter.com/UtahDEQ)), or call 1-800-458-0145.