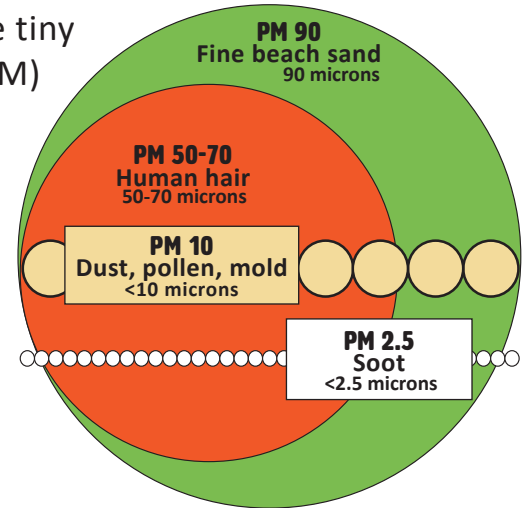


Dust storms & YOUR HEALTH

Dust storms arise when strong winds lift and disperse tiny sand and soil particles (called particulate matter or PM) from dry surfaces and suspend them in the air. Dust is made up of both PM 10 and PM 2.5, and these particles are smaller than a human hair. When inhaled they can harm your health.

Dust storms have the potential to harm the environment by causing erosion and depleting the soil of nutrients. Agricultural producers can suffer economic loss if their crops and livestock are damaged due to dust storms.



Particulate matter can harm your health



Breathing dust particulate matter can cause effects that range from minor to deadly. For most people, symptoms of inhaling dust will be minor irritation like itchy eyes or a sore throat.



Possible serious effects include asthma attacks, chest tightness, strokes and heart attacks.

Who is at greater risk?

- People with heart or lung diseases
- Those with colds
- Infants, children, and teens
- People 65 years and older
- Pregnant women
- Healthy adults working or exercising outdoors

What to do during a dust storm

- Avoid hard exercise outdoors
- Go indoors and keep indoor air clean
- Be alert for sudden changes in visibility
- Close windows, vents, and doors indoors
- Use an air cleaner with a HEPA filter in your car
- Slow down or stop driving and pull over if you have trouble seeing
- Wear a properly fitting N95 or better mask if you have to be outdoors. <https://tinyurl.com/healthmask>
- Seek immediate medical attention for serious symptoms
- Ask your Dr. for advice if you have a pre-existing condition



Sign up for dust storm alerts: www.weather.gov/enterprise/

