



Fine Particulate Matter (PM_{2.5})

PM_{2.5} are very small inhalable particles. PM_{2.5} can be emitted directly from a source or formed in the atmosphere as a result of complex reactions of chemicals such as sulfur dioxide and nitrogen oxides. EPA has set both a 24-hour standard and an annual standard for PM_{2.5}. PM_{2.5} can get deep into your lungs, aggravating asthma and decreasing lung function. In May 2024, EPA lowered the annual PM_{2.5} standard from 12.0 µg/m³ to 9.0 µg/m³.

Georgia, like most states, is transitioning to continuous monitoring of PM_{2.5} in order to provide real-time data to citizens. An emerging concern with the continuous monitors is that they tend to measure higher concentrations of PM_{2.5} than filter-based monitors. This difference appears to be greater during prescribed fire or wildfire events. This move to continuous monitoring is one of the reasons for the uptick in measured PM_{2.5} concentrations in 2021-2023. Georgia and other states are working with EPA to address this discrepancy.