

Air Quality Alert issued for Antigua and Barbuda due to Saharan Dust

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Residents and visitors in Antigua and Barbuda are being urged to take precautions as the air quality has reached "unhealthy" levels for sensitive groups.

The Antigua and Barbuda Meteorological Service has issued an Air Quality Alert, effective until this afternoon (Tuesday), due to high concentrations of particulate matter (PM2.5 and PM10) associated with a surge of Saharan dust across the islands.

The air quality alert is due to a surge of dust originating from the Saharan Desert that has spread across the Caribbean region.

With an Air Quality Index between 101-150, the current conditions pose an increased likelihood of respiratory symptoms among sensitive groups such as people with asthma, heart or lung disease, the elderly, children, and those with allergies.

The airborne particulates can also aggravate cardiovascular issues and eye and skin irritations.

While Saharan dust isn't an uncommon occurrence in Antigua and Barbuda, the Meteorological Service reports that the concentrations of particulate matter have spiked to unhealthy levels, warranting caution especially for vulnerable populations.

The Meteorological Service explains that these high concentrations of airborne particles pose increased risks, making it necessary to issue advisories and recom-

mend precautionary measures.

Health officials recommend that sensitive individuals limit their time outdoors and avoid strenuous outdoor activities until the air quality improves.

The general public should also take precautions such as:

- Keeping windows and doors closed as much as possible
- Wearing PM2.5 filtering face masks when going outside
- Monitoring symptoms and seeking medical care if issues arise

The good news is that forecasting models indicate the dust levels should decrease by this afternoon, allowing air quality to return to moderate levels across Antigua and Barbuda.

The Meteorological Service will continue providing updates on air quality and dust concentrations via their website antiguamet.com and social media channels.

With some preventative measures, the risk from this temporary dust incursion can be managed until cleaner air prevails.

May 25 WOMEN AND GIRLS HEALTH EXPO

Scrub Life Cares is thrilled to announce its upcoming event, the third annual "Grow with the Flo" Women and Girls Health Expo on May 25, at the Cana Moravian Church Ground in Swetes Village. This event is dedicated to serving girls and women in underserved communities by promoting menstrual and reproductive health education and empowering women and girls to take charge of their health and wellness journey.

URGENT NOTICE

Closure of Jamaican Consulate in Antigua and Barbuda

The Jamaican Consulate in Antigua and Barbuda has been closed temporarily since 01st March 2024. As an interim measure, members of the public, in **Antigua and Barbuda ONLY**, requiring consular services, may contact the Jamaican High Commission in Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago for assistance at: JHCPOSTT@gmail.com.

For urgent matters, contact may be made with the High Commission via WhatsApp at +1-868-277-6860.

Passports

Jamaicans wishing to renew their adult, machine-readable Jamaican passports are to utilize the online passport service offered by the Passport, Immigration and Citizenship Agency (PICA). In this regard, please visit the PICA website at https://passport.pica-online.com/PICA_ONLINE/

For the following applications listed at 1-5 below, kindly send directly by courier service to:

Passport, Immigration and Citizenship Agency (PICA)
25 Constant Spring Road
Kingston 10
Jamaica

Attention: Mrs. Delly Vassell

Director of Customer Service

cc.

Mrs. Neisha Wynter King

Supervisor, Overseas and Mission applications

1. First-Time Passports
2. First-time Adult Passports

(for applicants who are now moving from a minor status to adulthood at the age of 18)

3. Renewal of Minor passports
4. Replacement of Lost/ Stolen or Damaged passports
5. Name Change (by Deed Poll or Marriage)

Authentications:

Persons wishing to have their documents authenticated by an Apostille are required to send their original document(s), completed application form, fee of US\$30 per document, along with a pre-paid courier label and envelope, to:

Authentications Section
Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade
2 Port Royal Street, Kingston, Jamaica.

Apostille Application forms may be obtained by request via email: Apostilles@mfaft.gov.jm.

We apologize for any inconvenience caused by this closure and thank you for your understanding. We will advise as soon as details of the re-opening of a Consulate in Antigua and Barbuda are available.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade
Kingston, Jamaica
March 2024