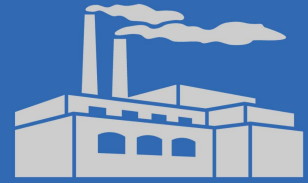


DOES YOUR COMMUNITY HAVE A PAPER MILL?

What You Should Know



It is common for community members living near paper mills to notice odors in the air while the mill is operating. Sulfur compounds are typical at paper mills which can cause unpleasant odors.

While it is possible that there could be harmful pollutants in the air, most environmental odors, such as those caused by a paper mill, are rarely at levels that can harm your health.

The Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry ([ATSDR](https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/faq)) (www.atsdr.cdc.gov/faq) may perform an Exposure Investigation to understand the types and levels of contaminants in the air caused by a paper mill, and any impacts on public safety.

Are you concerned about a paper mill near you? Your [local health department](https://www.doh.wa.gov/localhealth) (www.doh.wa.gov/localhealth) may also investigate odors in your area to determine whether they are harmful. Learn more about [Odor Investigations from ATSDR](https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/odors/odor_investigations.html) (www.atsdr.cdc.gov/odors/odor_investigations.html).

Can environmental odors make you sick?

Some people are more sensitive to environmental odors than others including young children, the elderly and pregnant people.

Symptoms vary based on a few different factors. Your sensitivity to the odor including your age and state of health, the type of substance and the amount of it in the air, and how long you're exposed can all impact symptoms. Common symptoms can include:

- **Headaches.**
- **Irritation to the eyes, nose or throat.**
- **Coughing/Wheezing.**
- **Shortness of breath.**
- **Chest tightness.**
- **Drowsiness.**

These symptoms usually occur during the time you are exposed to the odor, and are temporary. Generally, symptoms will pass when the odor disappears or when you leave the area. If your symptoms continue long after exposure you may consider seeking help from a health care provider.

What can you do to reduce exposure to these odors and decrease symptoms?

While environmental odors in your area may not be harming your health, they can be impacting your quality of life. See [ATSDR's Are Environmental Odors Toxic?](https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/odors/docs/Are_Environmental_Odors_Toxic_508.pdf) (PDF) (www.atsdr.cdc.gov/odors/docs/Are_Environmental_Odors_Toxic_508.pdf). If you have symptoms related to odors from a paper mill, there are a few things you can do to help improve your wellbeing. **When odors are strong:**

- Limit outdoor activities/Stay indoors.
 - Keep windows in the home closed and car windows rolled up when driving.
 - Exercise indoors.
- If possible, leave the area while symptoms persist.
- Wear a mask or facial covering while outside.
- Use your inhaler if you suffer from asthma and/or COPD.