

Community FAQs for Plainfield Warehouse Fire

Is my health at risk from inhaling smoke from this fire?

- Thick smoke from the Plainfield warehouse fire contained high levels of fine particulate material (PM). Exposure to high levels of PM may cause health problems for sensitive individuals, particularly people who have pre-existing cardiovascular or lung problems, such as asthma, but also young children and the elderly. Therefore, sensitive individuals should take precautions to avoid areas where there is visible smoke.
- Anyone who may have been exposed to the smoke and is experiencing health problems should contact their medical provider.

What chemicals are in the smoke?

- Response agencies are actively monitoring and sampling the air to determine the chemicals that may be present in the smoke. Based on current information, the main concern is the inhalation of fine particulate material (PM) in the smoke. In addition to particulate material, agencies are monitoring for other compounds but there are no concerns identified with other compounds at this time. Any additional information from air monitoring activity will be used to inform updated recommendations to the public.

What actions should I take when outdoors where there is smoke?

- Avoid smoky areas when possible.
- Wear an N95 or KN95 to provide respiratory protection from the fine particulates in the smoke if available. A cloth mask does not provide the same level of protection.
- Shower regularly.

What if there is debris or ash on my property?

- Out of an abundance of caution, we recommend wearing gloves when handling debris or cleaning ash from surfaces.
- Wash hands regularly with soap and lukewarm water throughout the day when cleaning.
- Remove large pieces of debris from yards or properties using gloves or a shovel and place in a garbage container.

- If you need to clean debris or ash, wearing an N95 or KN95 mask will provide protection from inhalation of particulates.
- Try to avoid walking or driving on the material.

What if there is ash/debris on residential surfaces?

- Do not let children play in or with items covered by the ash or debris.
- While outside playing or working in the yard, avoid hand to mouth contact and wash hands upon returning indoors.
- Clean toys, swing sets, patio furniture, BBQs, pools and spas before use in accordance with recommendations provided below.

How do we protect our pets?

- Keep cats indoors in debris-impacted areas.
- Dogs should be kept on leash when outside in debris-impacted areas.
- Do not let pets drink water from puddles, or drink water or eat food that was outside during the incident.
- If dogs or cats get ash on their paws or bodies, wash it off promptly.
- If pet toys were outside, wash them before use.

How do I do clean-up inside and outside my home if necessary?

- If clean-up must be performed in high traffic outdoor areas, water down all visible ash with a garden hose. Do not use leaf blowers or other methods that may cause ash or debris to become airborne.
- Hard surfaces (tile floors, countertops) can be wiped down with soapy water and rinsed. Uncovered kitchen items (pots, pans, flatware) should be washed with soapy water or run through the dishwasher.
- To clean swimming pools or spas, remove/skim debris, recirculate through the filters, and perform routine pool maintenance (pH levels, etc.).
- Individuals should remove visible large particle debris from yards using gloves or a shovel and place in a garbage container.
- Discard any food that may have been exposed and cannot be thoroughly washed prior to consumption. Empty and clean outside pet food and water bowls.

How do I protect myself if I have to clean surfaces?

- Wear protective clothing when cleaning surfaces that may contain soot that deposited from the fire. This includes gloves and if available, a N95 or KN95 mask to protect yourself from the inhalation of particles.

What do I do if I have surface water impacts on my property?

- Remove any floating debris along the shore or bank using gloves or a skimmer and dispose of it in the trash.

How do I address potential impacts to my HVAC systems?

- Clean or replace your HVAC filter to ensure that it is working efficiently and effectively. When removing or cleaning air filters, it is recommended to wear a mask and gloves. Turn on the system's "fan" or "recirculate" option to circulate the air in your home through the filter. If you have a window air conditioner, close the outdoor air damper.

Is drinking water at risk?

- There is no expected impact to city or well water.
- Citizens Energy Group does not expect ash and debris from the Plainfield warehouse fire to impact water supply from Eagle Creek Reservoir for its nearby T.W. Moses Water Treatment Plant because water is drawn about 15-feet below the surface. Citizens Energy Group continuously monitors the quality of the water coming into the treatment plant and throughout the treatment process. As a precaution, the utility is doing extra water quality sampling to confirm there are no unexpected impacts to water quality.

If you have any additional concerns or questions, please reach out to your local health department. If you are unsure which health department to contact, the Hendricks County Health Department has a dedicated number for questions relating to the fire:

317-718-6052.