

# Haze: Public advised to take preventive steps to reduce effects on health

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**SHAH ALAM:** The Selangor Health Department has advised people living in the state to take preventive steps to reduce the health effects caused by the current haze.

Selangor Health director, Datuk Dr Khalid Ibrahim said this was based on the haze readings at five permanent stations and one 'Mobile Continuous Air Quality Monitoring (MCAQM)' station in the state, where the air pollutant index (API) showed that the air quality in five areas had reached the "unhealthy level" yesterday and today.

"The five areas where the API reading was at the unhealthy level since yesterday were Petaling Jaya (102 to 134); Shah Alam (102 to 130); Port Klang (102 to 119); Banting (101 to 123) and Johan Setia, Klang (143 to 160).

"We are still monitoring the situation and if it worsens, and the API reading exceeds 200 (very unhealthy), the Selangor Health Department will open state and district operations rooms," he said in a statement here today.

Among the preventive measures recommended by the Selangor Health Department to reduce the health effects of the haze is to ensure the air indoors is always clean by avoiding contamination of cigarette smoke, and to close the windows to prevent the haze from going indoors.

Also recommended is the use of air-conditioners while driving, and choosing the internal cycle of air; drinking at least eight glasses of water a day; less physical activity outside the home; washing hands and face with soap and clear water after conducting outside activities; try to always stay indoors; postponing outdoor activities if the API reading exceeds 100, and using appropriate face masks when outdoors.

Dr Khalid added that the Health Department was also monitoring haze-related diseases such as infections of upper respiratory tract infection, asthma, and red eyes at five Health Ministry sentinel clinics.

The five clinics are the Kota Damansara Health Clinic (KK), the Section 7 KK in Shah Alam for the Petaling district, KK Pandamaran, Klang, KK Teluk Datok, Kuala Langat and KK Kuala Selangor.

— *Bernama*