



2022-2023 AIR QUALITY UPDATE
Another Year of Excellent Air Quality



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Air Quality in the Glades Is Safe, Better than Coastal and Suburban Areas

The latest air monitoring data is in, including data from the 2022-2023 harvest season and through August 2023. The data once again confirms that the Glades have excellent air quality.

Additionally, a study from the Princeton University-based *High Meadows Environmental Institute* shows the value of sugarcane farming in reducing the amount of carbon dioxide, CO₂, in the air.

The daily air quality readings show that air in the Glades region almost always remained in the top standard of the six categories established by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

Of the 335 recorded days monitored by the State of Florida's Department of Environmental Protection during this period, Glades air was in the "Good" category for 311 days, with only 24 days in the next highest range of "Moderate."

Florida used state-of-the-art technology to measure the amount of "fine particulates" (micrograms [µg]) in a cubic meter of air. The average reading in the Glades over 11 months: **7.36** "PM_{2.5}" per cubic meter. Readings of 12 and below are in the "Good" or best air quality category.

EPA AIR QUALITY INDEX STANDARDS BELLE GLADE AIR QUALITY MEASUREMENTS OCTOBER 2022 THROUGH AUGUST 2023 (335 DAYS)

Standard	EPA Established Particulate Count Range	Number of Days
Good	0.0 to 12.0	311
Moderate	12.1 to 35.4	24
Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups	35.5 to 55.4	0
Unhealthy	55.5 to 150.4	0
Very Unhealthy	150.5 to 250.4	0
Hazardous	250.5+	0

92.8 PERCENT OF DAILY AVERAGES ARE IN THE TOP "GOOD" RANGE



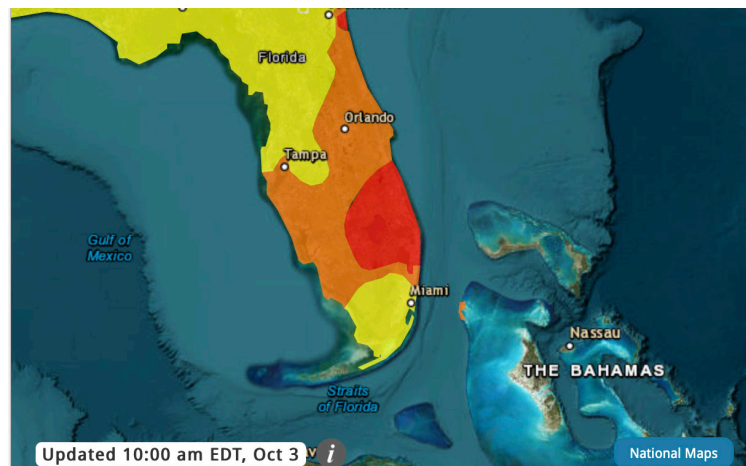
Comparing Glades readings to measurements in Delray and Royal Palm Beach shows the Glades air is even better than in coastal areas.

Average October 2022–August 2023 Air Quality Data (in $PM_{2.5}$)

Belle Glade	Royal Palm Beach	Delray
7.36	7.52	7.62

The EPA's "Moderate" air quality category goes from 12.1 " $PM_{2.5}$ " to 35.4 " $PM_{2.5}$ ". The Glades readings in the 24 days of air measurements in the Moderate range averaged readings of 15.0 " $PM_{2.5}$ " – just slightly above the "Good" category. State monitoring data can be found at: www.floridatracking.com. Other important items of note:

- Half of the Moderate readings came in the summer, after the harvest season was over, and at a time that Saharan dust was making its way across the Florida peninsula. Saharan dust is one of the common items that make up fine particulates in South Florida, along with automobile exhaust, power plants, smoke, field dust, fireworks, BBQs, pollen and many other natural and man-made sources.
- On almost all of the "Moderate" days, measurements in Delray and Royal Palm Beach also were recorded as "Moderate," demonstrating the general consistency in quality of the air throughout the region.
- Excellent air quality is generally consistent throughout the region all year-round, but that was disrupted on October 3, when smoke from Canadian wildfires reached Central and South Florida. As a result, our local "good" and safe air quality in the region moved into the "unhealthy" range. At 10:00am in Belle Glade, the public air quality monitor showed an AQI reading of 161 as smoke from Canadian wildfires settled over the area. Air quality readings never came close to the "unhealthy" range over the past year covered in this report before, during or after the Glades harvest season.





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Finally, every day--7 days a week, 365 days a year, the Glades communities grow 450,000 acres of sugarcane, corn and other green crops that clean the air through photosynthesis by removing carbon dioxide and releasing oxygen.

On the battle against rising levels of CO₂, the *High Meadows Environmental Institute's* Carbon Mitigation Initiative, reports that sugarcane has "turbocharged" efficiency to remove carbon dioxide from the air, calling sugarcane and corn "super-efficient workhorse crops."

A summary of the study can be found at: <https://www.cmi.princeton.edu/annual-meetings/annual-reports/year-2020/drought-tolerant-agriculture-for-semi-arid-ecosystems/>



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