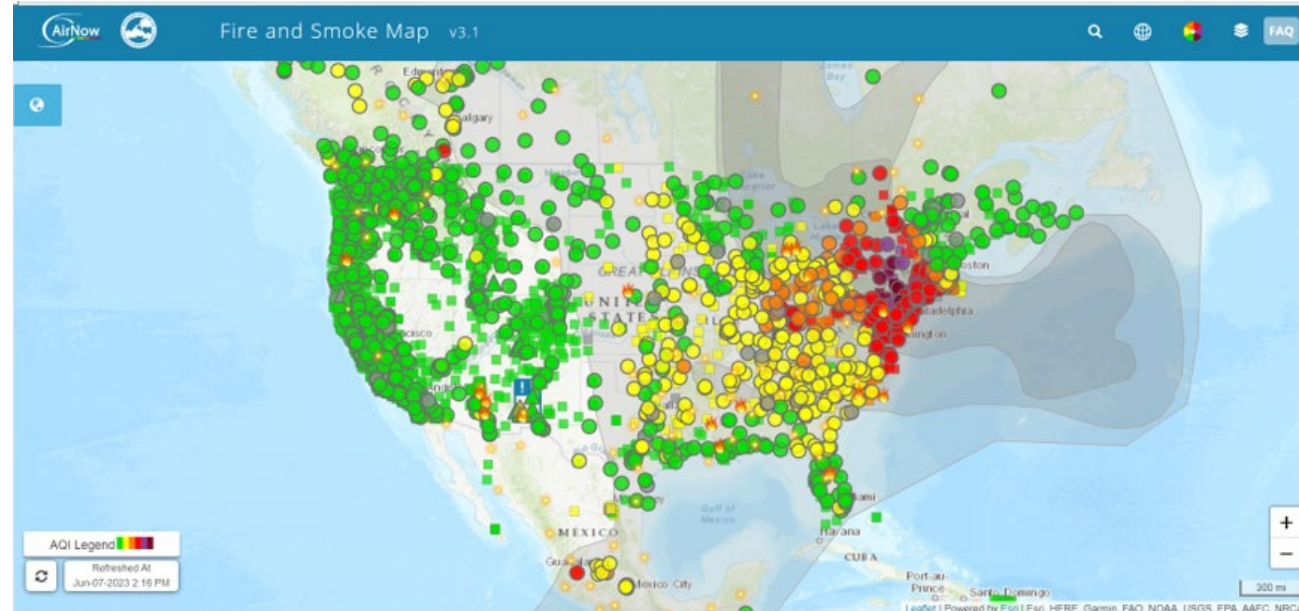


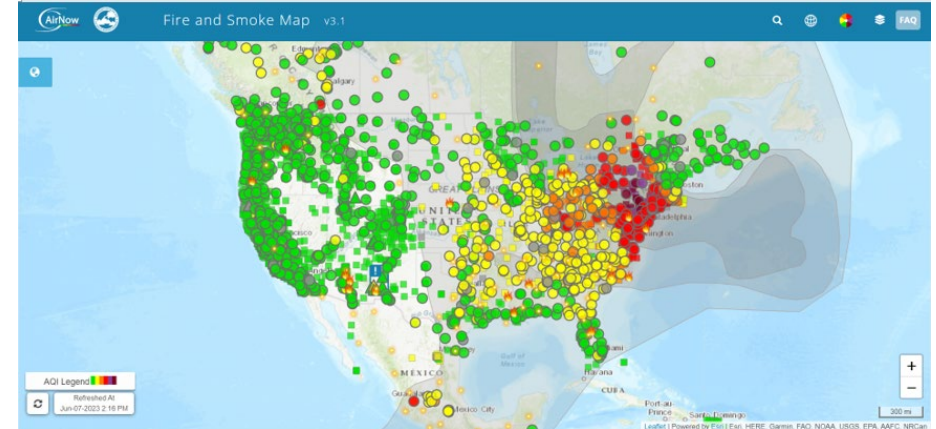
# Smoke from Wildfires in Canada



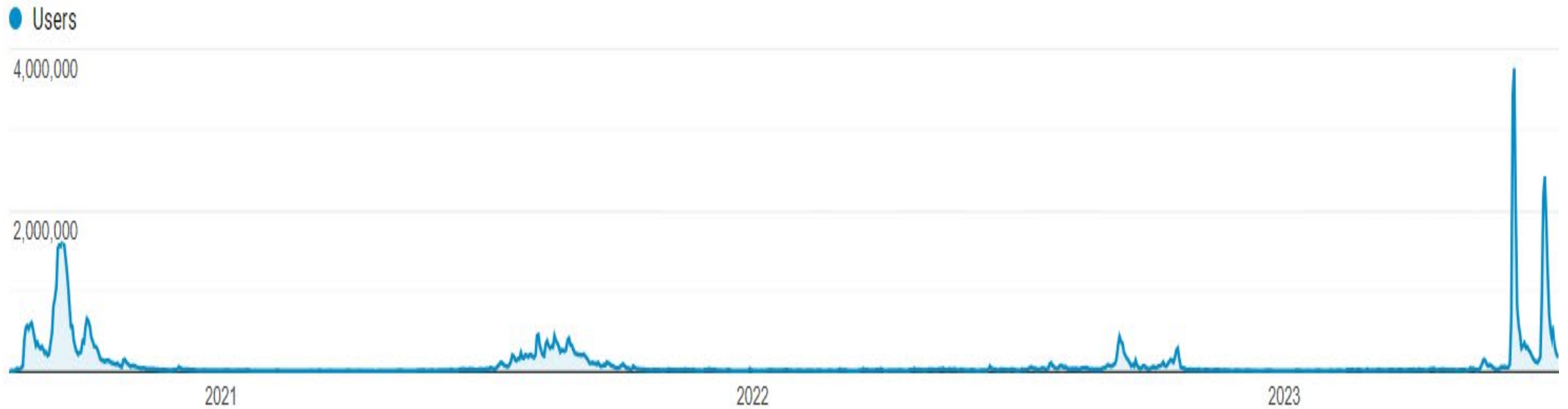
**Alison Davis and Phil Dickerson**  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency,  
Office of Air Quality Planning & Standards

# What We'll Cover

- Traffic! AirNow and the AirNow Fire and Smoke Map
- Questions we received from public and media
  - Types of public inquiries
  - Types of media inquiries
- Areas of confusion
- Resources
  - What's available
  - What's needed?



# Smoke episodes dominated AirNow traffic for past few years



- Historic high was August 2020 until the early June smoke in the NE US
- Most recent smoke in the upper Midwest was higher than 2020, but not quite as high as the Northeast event

# Most recent smoke episodes in detail: AirNow overall

All Users  
100.00% Users

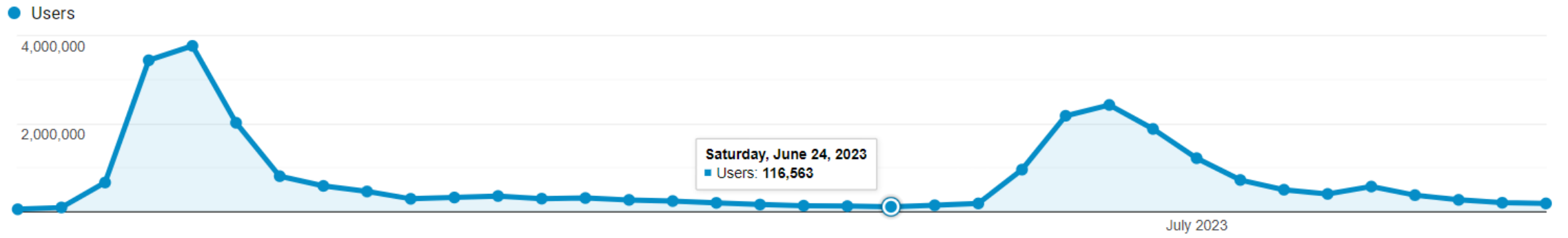
+ Add Segment

Jun 4, 2023 - Jul 9, 2023

## Overview

Users vs. Select a metric

Hourly Day Week Month



Users  
15,763,167

New Users  
15,554,487

Sessions  
44,462,011

Number of Sessions per User  
2.82

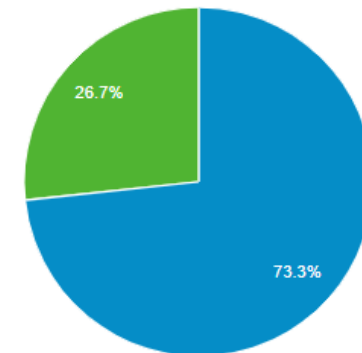
Pageviews  
74,414,530

Pages / Session  
1.67

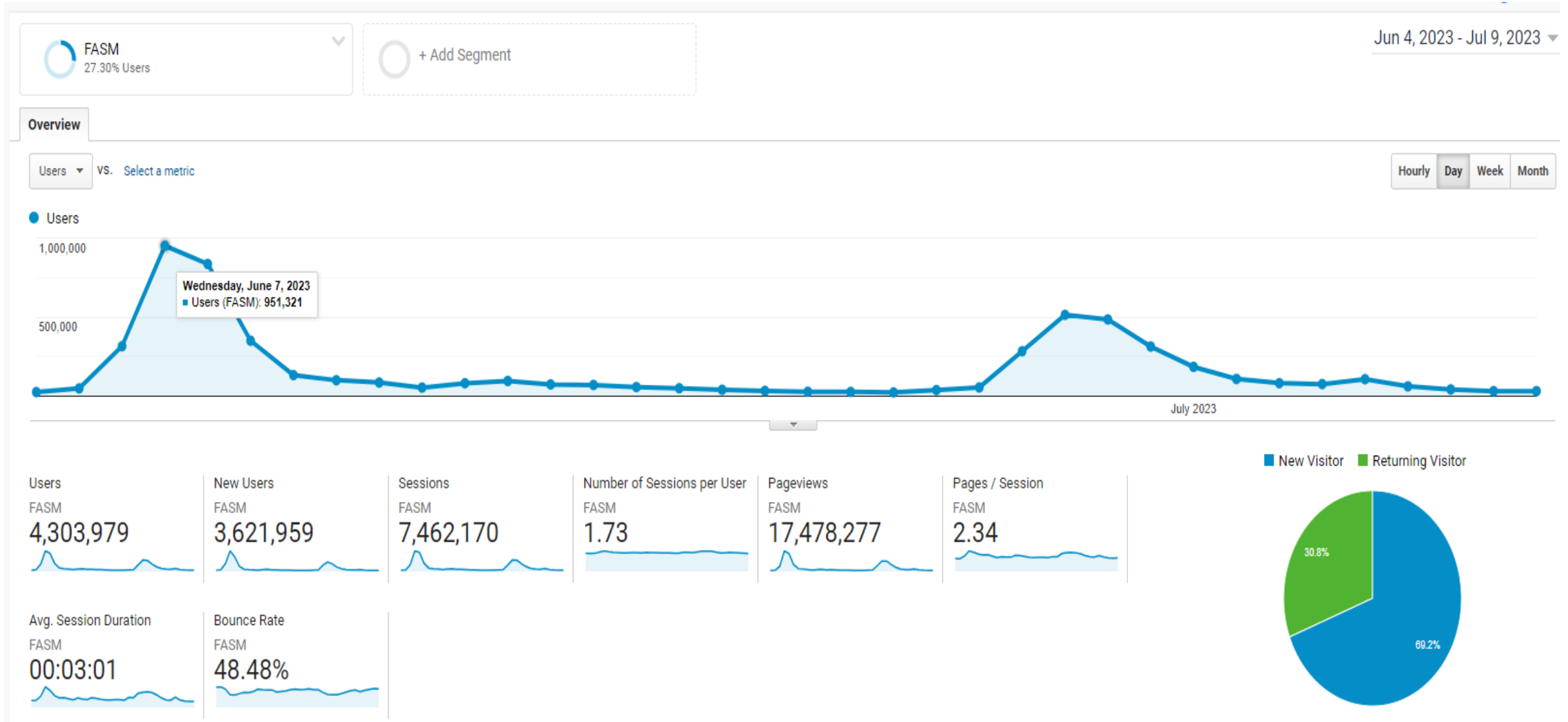
Avg. Session Duration  
00:02:15

Bounce Rate  
66.67%

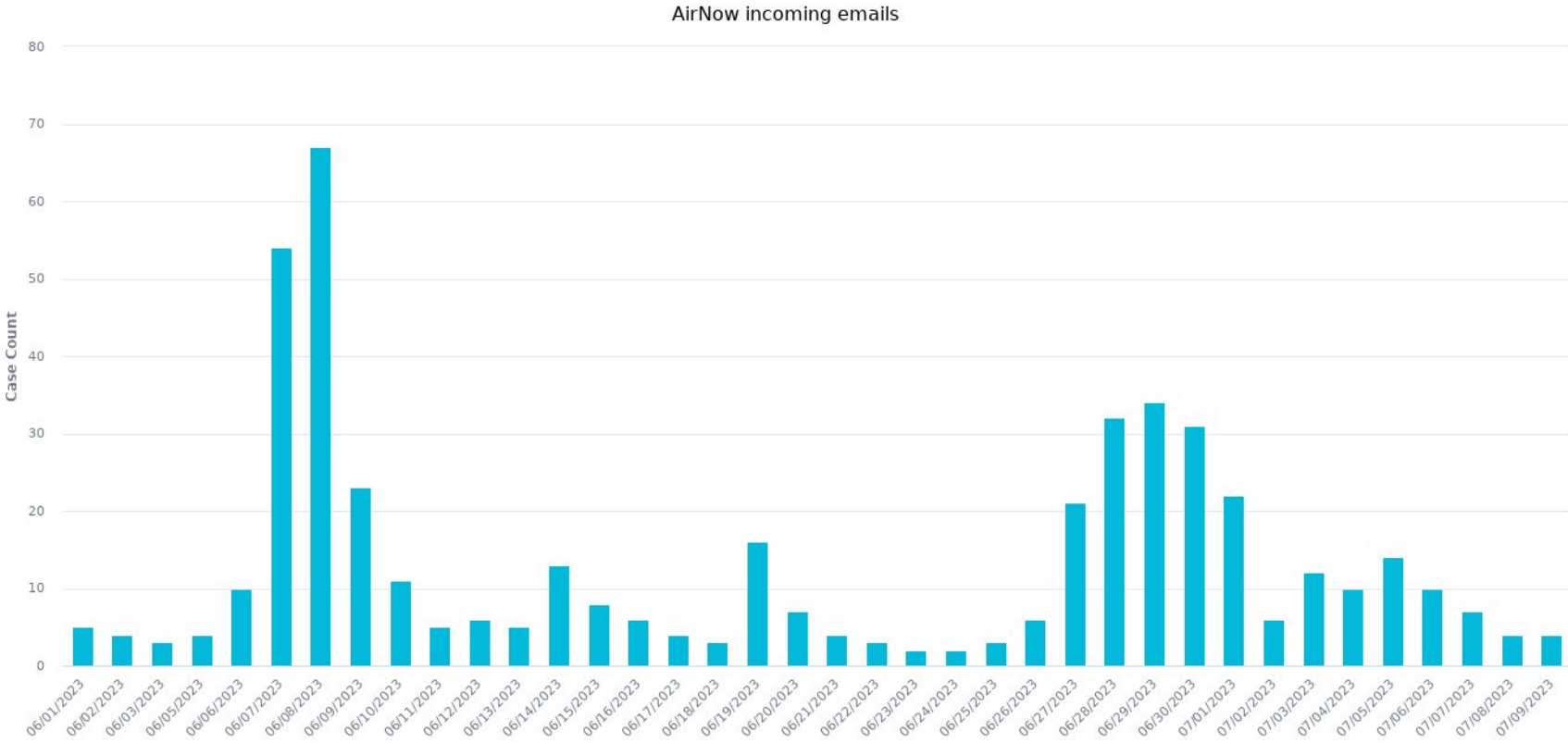
■ New Visitor ■ Returning Visitor



# Most recent smoke episodes in detail: Fire and Smoke Map



# AirNow public inquiries also tracked the smoke



# What the public wanted to know

- Why does the dial differ from:
  - The forecast?
  - The Fire and Smoke Map?
  - Why is the dial green when I see/smell smoke outside? (some reporting areas are ozone-only)
  - Other sources (i.e., weather apps)?
- Do masks help?
- When will conditions improve?



# What the news media wanted to know

- Media inquiries started in late May and included
  - Requests for AirNow data files
  - Numerous rankings/worst ever questions, like:
    - Was the air quality in X location at X hour the worst the location has ever experienced?
    - Who has the worst air quality today/yesterday because of smoke?
    - Why is air quality in one city is worse than another (such as LA v. NYC on July 5)?



## Common news media inquiries, cont.

### Numbers questions, such as:

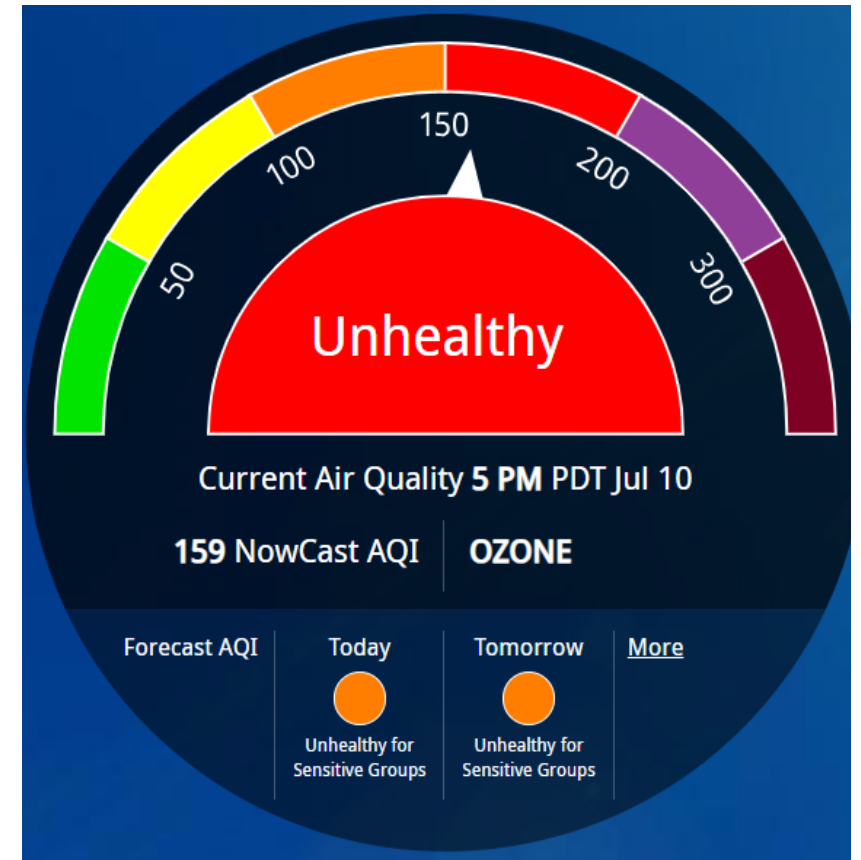
- How many people live in areas under air quality alerts?

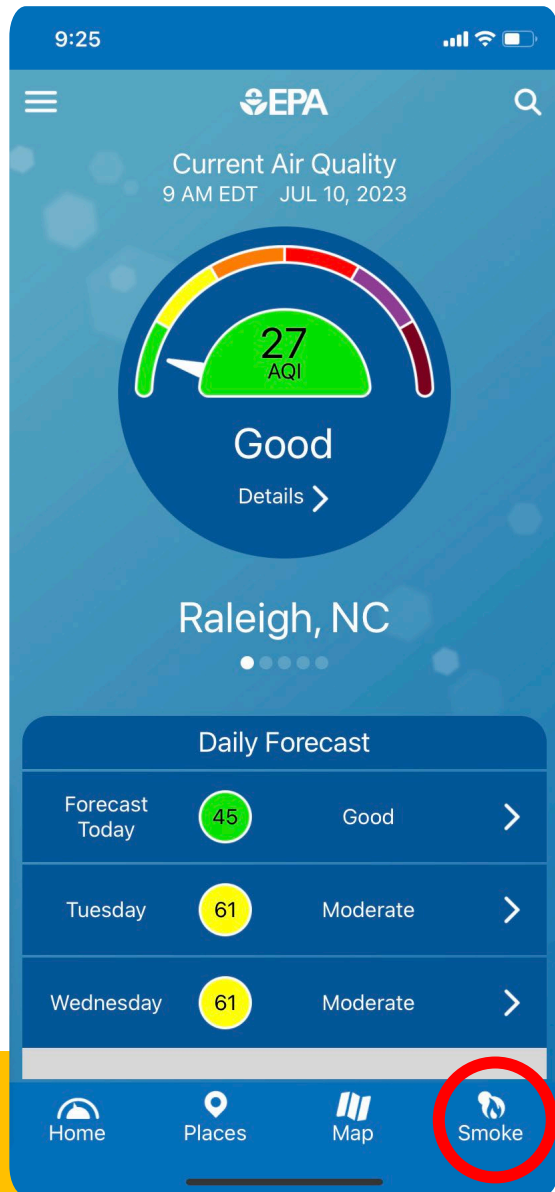
### And others, including

- How AQI forecasting works
- Why people in NYC were smelling something like burning plastic

# Some areas of confusion

- Dial v. Fire and Smoke Map (or Interactive Map)
- Areas that have only ozone monitors reporting Good(green) when smoke is visible
- Whether N95s and KN95s are recommended (and confusion about the term respirator)
- Forecasts not matching current conditions due to forecasting the 24-hour average





# Selected Resources

- When wildfire smoke is affecting your area, please send people to the AirNow Fire and Smoke Map
  - <https://fire.airnow.gov> or
  - In the AirNow app (tap the smoke icon)
- Questions about why the dial and map may differ <https://www.airnow.gov/fires/using-airnow-during-wildfires/>
- Simple info on what to do <https://www.airnow.gov/wildfires/>
- Wildfire Guide fact sheets <https://www.airnow.gov/wildfire-guide-factsheets/>
- **What resources do you need?**



Contact us  
with  
questions!

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