LA FIRE HEALTH STUDY

DATA BRIEF 7.1

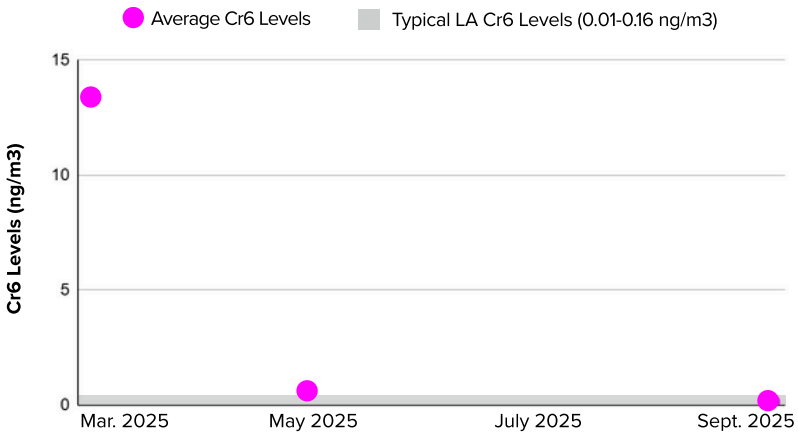
Preliminary Data Findings: Reduced Chromium-6 Levels in Air near LA Burn Zones

Updated: 11/12/2025

UPDATED FINDINGS

- **Background:** In August, the LA Fire HEALTH Study consortium reported that it had detected elevated levels of chromium-6 (Cr6) nanoparticles in air samples that were taken in March, April, and May in the Altadena and Pacific Palisades areas. These findings were published in a preprint journal article[1] and in a Data Brief on the LA Fire HEALTH website.[2]
- **Testing in September found that those levels have decreased and are currently back to the typical low levels detected in Los Angeles.** This was consistent in both the mobile measurements and stationary air samples we collected. South Coast AQMD found similar results with their stationary samples, also collected in September.
- **This is good news for the community.** Our interpretation of the measurements is that chromium-6 weathered back to its more stable and less toxic chromium-3 form over time. Measurements of total chromium in the air are consistent with this interpretation.
- **Further investigation is still needed to determine the source of the Cr6 in earlier measurements**, to help us understand how to prevent more exposures in future wildfires, and to ensure that future debris removal or construction activities in the area do not cause additional exposures.

Below is a chart of the average levels of chromium-6 measured through mobile monitoring in Altadena and Pacific Palisades at their peaks in March, and then again at their low levels in September (in many cases, the measurements were below the detectable limits of the measuring devices used). The gray box indicates typical background levels for the region as measured by South Coast AQMD.[3]



HOW DID WE MEASURE THIS?

Using the same mobile monitoring instruments that were used in March-May, scientists measured particles in the air in burn-impacted areas in Palisades and Altadena throughout one week in September. Samples of particles were collected and examined to determine the concentration of pollutants such as chromium-6. These measurements were then compared to data from South Coast AQMD stationary air quality monitors.

1. Michael Kleeman, Christopher Cappa, Peter Green et al. "Airborne Hexavalent Chromium Nanoparticles Detected Around Cleanup Zones for the 2025 Los Angeles Wildfires," 26 Aug 2025, PREPRINT (Version 1) available at Research Square. https://doi.org/10.21203/rs.3.rs-7401328/v1
2. LA Fire HEALTH Study. "Data Brief 7." https://lafirehealth.org/new-la-fire-health-data-brief-chromium-6-detected-in-air-near-la-burn-zones/
3. South Coast AQMD. 2025 Wildfre Response: Hex Chrome Monitoring. https://www.aqmd.gov/2025-wildfire-response