School Flag PROGRAM

School Flag Program: Fact Sheet

What Is The School Flag Program?

The School Flag Program uses brightly colored flags based on U.S. EPA's Air Quality Index (AQI) to notify teachers, coaches, students, and others about outdoor air quality conditions. Schools raise a flag each day that corresponds to their local air quality forecast.

Why Is This Program Important?

The School Flag Program creates public awareness of outdoor air quality conditions. Children can continue to get plenty of physical activity, while still protecting their health from poor air quality. Children (including teenagers) are at greater risk from air pollution because their lungs are still developing and they breathe more air per pound of body weight than adults. When air quality is unhealthy, activities can often be modified or moved inside. Recommendations for outdoor activities on poor air quality days can be found at www.airnow.gov/schoolflag.

What Is The Air Quality Index?

The Air Quality Index is a guide for reporting daily air quality. It uses colors and numbers to show how clean or polluted the air is. EPA uses the Air Quality Index to report ground-level ozone and particle pollution. For each pollutant, EPA has established national standards to protect people's health.

EPA Flag Program Contact

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What Do The Colors Mean?

The School Flag Program uses green, yellow, orange, red and purple flags. These colors correspond to the Air Quality Index.



Green means air quality is good.



Yellow means air quality is acceptable.



Orange means air quality is unhealthy for sensitive groups -- people with lung disease such as asthma, children, and older adults.



Red means air quality is unhealthy.



Purple means air quality is very unhealthy.

How Will I Know What Color Flag To Use?

Check the AQI at www.epa.gov/airnow. Sign up for emails (www.airnow.gov/enviroflash), download the AirNow app, or install the AirNow widget on your website.

EPA United States Environmental Protection Agency

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