

AIR QUALITY FLAG PROGRAM

Newsletter

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Happy Holidays

The holidays are a time for giving and the perfect time to thank you for what you've given to support EPA's Air Quality Flag Program. Promoting a voluntary program may not always be first on your "To-Do List" but from the growth this year it's pretty clear that you've made the program a priority. Thank you for that. As the program continues to gain momentum your support is vital. Many, many thanks for your help in communicating air quality information to our students and the members of our communities.

GOOD NEWS & GREAT NEWS!

The good news is I will be retiring December 31st. I hope this will be my chance to relax a bit, go antiquing, read some good books, try new recipes and spend more time with family. It's been such a pleasure working with all of you. I can't thank you enough for supporting the flag program and understanding the value and benefit it brings to so many nationwide.

The great news is Melissa Payne will be stepping in to serve as the program's Team Lead. Thank you, Melissa.

Melissa has worked at EPA for over 21 years. She started in Washington, DC writing regulations for stratospheric protection and then transferred to the ENERGY STAR energy efficiency program as National Manager for K-12 school districts and higher education. Now back in her hometown of Chapel Hill, Melissa enjoys working on marketing and outreach for a variety of air pollution regulations and voluntary air quality programs.

There is no doubt you are in good hands and the program is sure to gain even more momentum.

Contact Information:

Melissa Payne
 payne.melissa@epa.gov
 919-541-3609

~Donna Rogers



Current Stats: There are 1,650 schools and organizations in 41 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico participating in the Air Quality Flag Program. Thanks to all of you for doing your part to make this happen.



PARTICLES IN THE AIR – YEAR-ROUND!

Particle pollution is not just a summertime pollutant but rather a year-round pollutant that can affect the air we breathe daily.

Particle pollution, also known as particulate matter (PM), is a complex mixture of extremely small particles and liquid droplets that get into the air. Particle levels can be especially high near busy roads, in urban and industrial areas or when there is smoke in the air from wood stoves, fireplaces, campfires, or wildfires. Once inhaled, these particles can affect the heart and lungs and cause serious health effects.

This is one reason that it's important to display the air quality flags year-round in areas that have issues with particle pollution. The flag color sends a signal to the students, teachers and members of the community that the air is either clean or dirty. So check the forecast and display the flag no matter what time of year. And remember, you're doing your part to protect the health of your students, friends, neighbors and loved ones.



DOES YOUR GREEN FLAG LOOK A LITTLE SHABBY?

If so, that's a good thing. It means you're using your green flag the most, which means the air quality in your area is pretty clean. If your green flag has seen its best days and you'd like to replace it, you can order a single flag from a flag vendor. The cost should be around \$16. Search "order air quality flag pennant" for an online vendor.



New Resource

The new AQFP postcard is now available. This 4"x6" two sided card is a great way to share the flag program message. We have a good number on hand. Order your supply from NSCEP at www.epa.gov/nscep. Search "456F18003."

Flag Team

Melissa Payne
Beth Landis
Miki Wayland
Ellen Wildermann

payne.melissa@epa.gov
landis.elizabeth@epa.gov
wayland.michelle@epa.gov
wildermann.ellen@epa.gov

