



Air Quality Flag Program: Fact Sheet

What Is the Air Quality Flag Program?

The Flag Program uses brightly colored flags based on the U.S. EPA's Air Quality Index (AQI) to notify people and their communities about outdoor air quality conditions. Organizations raise a flag each day that corresponds to their local air quality forecast.

Why Is the Flag Program Important?

The Flag Program creates public awareness of outdoor air quality conditions. People can continue to get plenty of physical activity, while still protecting their health from poor air quality. When air quality is unhealthy, people can modify their activities, or move them inside. Recommendations for outdoor activities on poor air quality days can be found at airnow.gov/flag.

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.

What Do the Colors Mean?

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

How Will I Know What Color Flag To Use?

On the Flag Program home page (airnow.gov/flag), click "Which flag do I fly?" and enter your zipcode. At airnow.gov, you can sign up to get AQI emails, download the AirNow app, or install an AQI widget.

 A green flag with the word "green" written on it.	Green means air quality is good.
 A yellow flag with the word "yellow" written on it.	Yellow means air quality is moderate.
 An orange flag with the word "orange" written on it.	Orange means air quality is unhealthy for sensitive groups -- people with heart disease or lung disease such as asthma, children & teens, people who are active outdoors, and older adults.
 A red flag with the word "red" written on it.	Red means air quality is unhealthy.
 A purple flag with the word "purple" written on it.	Purple means air quality is very unhealthy.

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