

SIGN UP!

You can sign up for free email AQI notifications at www.airqualitypartnership.org

The daily air quality forecast is posted at www.airqualitypartnership.org and www.airnow.gov

If you don't have a computer, the air quality forecast is also available at **1-800-872-7261**



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CHILDREN & AIR QUALITY

The Greater Philadelphia Region has

an air pollution problem. Over the years,

the region has not met the health-based air quality standards for ground level ozone and fine particle pollution. Medical studies continue to show that these pollutants pose serious health risks to children and negatively impact lung development and lung function. **Know the facts; protect your**

health, prevent air pollution!



KNOW THE FACTS



Ozone

Ozone, also known as “smog,” is a harmful pollutant that forms on the hot days of summer when there is bright sunshine and little breeze. Ozone pollution is particularly harmful to children because it damages lungs while they are still growing.

Ozone is a particularly difficult problem for the estimated 140,000 children in the region suffering from pediatric asthma because ozone irritates lung tissue and constricts breathing passages, making breathing difficult and sometimes painful. Ozone exposure diminishes lung capacity and increases the likelihood of lung infections.

Fine Particle Pollution

Fine Particle Pollution (PM 2.5), or soot, is made up of tiny particles of liquids, dust, and metals that can be breathed deep into the lungs. Particle pollution is especially dangerous for children because it can cause long-term damage to the lungs, increase hospital visits, and aggravate existing breathing conditions such as asthma.

Air Quality Index



The Partnership uses the Air Quality Index (AQI), a common color-coded scale, to communicate daily air quality conditions.

GREEN = good air quality

YELLOW = moderate

ORANGE = air quality is unhealthy for sensitive groups; including older adults

RED = air quality is unhealthy for everyone

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PROTECT YOUR HEALTH

Exercise is important to a healthy lifestyle and especially important for growing children, but on days when the AQI reaches Code Orange or Code Red levels, parents should limit their children’s strenuous activities. The key to managing the negative effects of air pollution is to limit exposure to environmental pollutants.

By knowing the AQI, parents can be prepared for days when air pollution might aggravate breathing conditions or damage developing lungs. If a child has asthma or other breathing disorder, knowing the AQI may even prevent hospital visits or missed school days.

Encourage your school’s nurse or administrators to monitor the AQI and manage students’ activities accordingly.

PREVENT AIR POLLUTION

Preventing air pollution in the first place is the best way to protect the health of the entire community and the environment. Everyone can take a few simple steps to prevent air pollution, especially on days when air quality is poor.



Things we can all do!

1. Take public transportation
2. Save energy in our homes
3. Recycle



On poor air quality days, these actions are especially effective:

1. Carpool with your friends
2. Don’t use gas-powered lawn equipment
3. Avoid the drive-thru