

City of Fort Collins Parks and Recreation Department

Air Quality Policy and Procedure

The Fort Collins Parks and Recreation Department wants to ensure the safety and well-being of our participants and staff. In cases of air quality concerns, the department will take into consideration Air Quality Index (AQI), Levels of Health Concerns and Health Effects to make a final decision on the participation in City programs/practices/games and outdoor activities; the department decision will be final!

Air Quality Policies and Procedures

- The Fort Collins Parks and Recreation Staff will work closely with the Climate Action team and monitor the City of Fort Collins Website that tracks the most current AQI values. In addition, they can use the following websites to check the local AQI.
 - The AirNow website at www.airnow.gov reports local air quality using the AQI. Also, you can sign up to get daily local air quality alerts by email at <http://www.enviroflash.info/>.
 - Additionally, air quality forecasts and current conditions are posted online at http://www.colorado.gov/airquality/air_quality.aspx (see example below).



- **Particulate Matter:** Particulate matter related to wildfires generally consists of fine particles (PM2.5), which are less than 2.5 microns in diameter (about 1/20 the width of a human hair). The EPA has set health based standards for 24-Hour averages of PM2.5, but 24-hour averages often do not reflect the transitory nature of wildfires. In addition to 24-hour averages, 1-hour PM2.5 measurements are used to monitor concentrations more relevant to wildfire conditions.
 - If particulate matter measurements are not available, or you do not have access to them, you can gauge the current visibility conditions to determine the appropriate response for smoky conditions. A determination of visibility is probably

the best instantaneous indicator, but it is only useful if low clouds and weather conditions are not affecting visibility. To determine visual range, it is recommended that you:

- **Visibility:** In most cases, it is possible to approximate visibility with a person’s eye by gauging the maximum distance that objects can be discerned
 - Face away from the sun
 - Determine the limit of your visible range by looking for targets at known distances (miles)
 - Visible range is when an object you can easily see in the distance disappears
 - Use the visibility values in the AQI table above to determine the air quality category

- Based on the readings/warnings and information obtained decisions will be made as followed:

Air Quality Thresholds, Cautionary Statements and Response Actions					
Air Quality	Cautionary Statements	City of Fort Collins Parks and Recreation Response Plan	1-Hour PM _{2.5} (µg/m ³)	24-hour PM _{2.5} (µg/m ³)	Visibility (miles)
Good	Air quality is considered satisfactory, and air pollution poses little or no risk.	Will proceed with scheduled outdoor activity.	0 – 40.0	0.0 – 12.0	≥ 10 miles
Moderate	Air quality is acceptable; however, for some pollutants there may be a moderate health concern to unusually sensitive people	Will proceed with scheduled outdoor activity.	40.1 – 80.0	12.1 – 35.4	5-10
Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups	Although general public is not likely to be affected, people with heart or lung disease, older adults and children are at greater risk from the presence of particles in the air.	Will proceed with scheduled outdoor activity but parents/coaches/volunteers/staff will monitor all participants closely. The city will provide educational awareness to participants concerned with the air quality.	80.1 – 175.0	35.5 – 55.4	3-5

Unhealthy	Everyone may begin to experience some adverse health effects, and members of the sensitive groups may experience more serious effects.	Use extreme caution when performing outside activities. Provide educational awareness to participants, parents, coaches and staff so they can make an educated decision to participate or not. If possible try to relocate outdoor programs to the indoors.	175.0 – 300.0	55.5 – 150.4	1.5 - 3
Very Unhealthy	This would trigger a health alert signifying that everyone may experience more serious health effects.	Cancel or relocate youth outdoor programs. Continue adult outdoor programs however, educate citizens regarding air quality concerns and allow for participants to withdraw from program or reschedule activity.	300.1 – 500.0	150.5 – 250.4	1 – 1.5
Hazardous	This would trigger health warnings of emergency conditions. The entire population is more likely to be affected.	Cancellation, reschedule or relocation to an indoor facility for all activities will be put into effect as this level is too extreme to accommodate physical activity.	≥ 500.1	≥ 250.5	≤ 1