

# RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SCHOOLS IN STANISLAUS COUNTY ON POOR AIR QUALITY DAYS

## AIR QUALITY INDEX (AQI) CHART FOR PARTICULATE MATTER POLLUTION

ACTIVITY	0 to 50 GOOD	51 to 100 MODERATE	101 to 150 UNHEALTHY FOR SENSITIVE GROUPS	151 to 200 UNHEALTHY FOR EVERYONE	201 to 300 VERY UNHEALTHY
Recess (15 min)	No Restrictions	No Restrictions	Make indoor space available for children with asthma or other respiratory problems.	Any child who complains of difficulty breathing, or who has asthma or other respiratory problems, will play indoors.	Restrict outdoor activities to light to moderate exercise.
P.E. (1 hr)	No Restrictions	No Restrictions	Make indoor space available for children with asthma or other respiratory problems.	Any child who complains of difficulty breathing, or who has asthma or other respiratory problems, will play indoors.	Restrict outdoor activities to light to moderate exercise not to exceed one hour.
Scheduled Sporting Events	No Restrictions	Exceptionally sensitive individuals should limit intense activities.	Individuals with asthma or other respiratory/cardiovascular illness should be medically managing their condition. Increase rest periods and substitutions to lower breathing rates.	Re-evaluate air pollution levels at 4 p.m. Consideration should be given to rescheduling or relocating event.	Event should be rescheduled or relocated.
Athletic Practice & Training (2 to 4 hrs)	No Restrictions	Exceptionally sensitive individuals should limit intense activities.	Individuals with asthma or other respiratory/cardiovascular illness should be medically managing their condition. Increase rest periods and substitutions to lower breathing rates.	Activities over 2 hours should decrease intensity and duration. Add rest breaks or substitutions to lower breathing rates.	Sustained rigorous exercise for more than one hour must be rescheduled, moved indoors or discontinued.

**Note: All guidelines are cumulative (left to right and top to bottom) as duration and intensity of activities increase.**

## How to Use This Chart

This chart is for restriction of outdoor activities affected by air pollution. It should be used to modify plans for outdoor activities of less than four hours duration, including recess, lunch, and physical education class. Use it in conjunction with air quality forecasts and current conditions. *Other air pollution episodes such as wildfire smoke further increase respiratory health risks. In this situation, contact your local Air Quality Management District for air quality conditions.*

Daily forecasts are updated by noon. Updates can be viewed at [www.valleyair.org](http://www.valleyair.org). Canceling or rescheduling vigorous outdoor activities in the morning should be considered to decrease the risk of exposure to pollutants on high pollution days.

Here's an example of how this chart might be used to determine changes to be made for a Friday afternoon Physical Education program:

**Step 1:** On Thursday afternoon, check the forecast for Friday at [www.valleyair.org](http://www.valleyair.org). While you're there, sign up for Air Alert, to be notified by e-mail about the latest changes in air quality and Healthy Air Living. The Air Quality Index (AQI) forecast is also available by calling the air quality information line at **1 800-766-4463**.

**Step 2:** If the forecast for Friday is Orange or Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups, make arrangements to have indoor space available for children with asthma and other respiratory or cardiovascular problems.

**Step 3:** On Friday, prior to class, check the current AQI. Since air pollution can vary from one area to another, click on the map for pollution levels in your area. If the AQI in your area has moved to Moderate- (yellow), no action is needed. However, if the AQI has moved to Unhealthy- (red), even children without respiratory problems may complain of breathing difficulties and they should play indoors as well.

The health benefits of regular exercise are well documented. The intent of this chart is to help children continue to exercise while protecting their health when air quality is poor. Even when air quality is poor, exercise can be continued indoors.

Particulate matter and ozone are invisible pollutants and strong irritants that can cause constriction of the airways, forcing the respiratory system to work harder in order to provide oxygen. It can also cause other health problems such as aggravated respiratory disease, damage to the deep portions of the lungs, wheezing, dry throat, headache, nausea, increased fatigue, weakened athletic performance and more.

Long-term exposure to polluted air can have permanent health effects including decreased lung function, possible development of diseases such as asthma, bronchitis, and cardiac disease, or a shortened life span. Pollutants may reach their highest level during the afternoon and early evening hours. Check pollution levels in the afternoon if you're unsure of whether or not to have afternoon games or practices.

**Please note: Before canceling a scheduled outdoor athletic event, call your local air district for up-to-date information for your specific location.**



[www.stanasthma.org](http://www.stanasthma.org)



*Adapted from the Sacramento County Metropolitan Air Quality Management District*