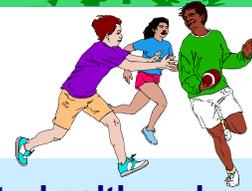




PLEASE POST

WHO? Childcare Providers, Camp Directors, and Summer Staff



WHAT? AIR POLLUTION! On hot summer days, ozone levels can become unhealthy for sensitive population groups. Fine particle pollution (PM_{2.5}) can be a problem year round. Children and teens fall in the “sensitive” category because their lungs are still developing. One out of every 13 school-age students has asthma or other breathing challenges which can worsen on bad air days.

Protect health when pollution levels are high. If air quality is expected to be “unhealthy for sensitive groups”, ensure that children and teens reduce activity levels for sports or games that involve intense physical exertion:

BAD AIR, WHERE? What goes up must come down and air emissions can travel for hundreds of miles. Even in the lovely, often rural setting of Michigan camps, pollution can affect air quality. Ozone is sometimes worse in beautiful, pristine areas away from urban areas due to meteorological transport. Not fair, but true.

- Reschedule the time of day for strenuous activities
- Rotate players frequently
- Reduce the intensity of exertion

WHEN? It is helpful to know which pollutant is causing poor air quality and the time of the day it’s likely to have the greatest effect on people. Two things are required to form ground-level ozone - hot weather and air emissions. High concentrations are most likely to occur on hot, sticky, hazy, sunny days ... high temperature days with light winds. Ozone levels in Michigan tend to peak in mid-afternoon to evening hours and, if concentrations are elevated, that's when to reduce physical exertion. Fine Particle levels can be high at any time of the year.

HOW CAN I BE PREPARED? It's easy to keep track of air quality and make good decisions to protect health. The Air Quality Index (AQI) is a simple tool used to report current air quality conditions. The DEQ “**MIair**” website provides forecasts and near real-time AQI values. A color-coded map shows whether the air is:

GOOD, **MODERATE**, **UNHEALTHY FOR SENSITIVE GROUPS**, or **UNHEALTHY** for all.

FORECASTING BAD AIR: Action! Day programs inform people when bad air days are expected via news announcements. If ozone pollution levels are predicted to reach the "unhealthy for sensitive groups" health indicator, an *Ozone Action!* Day is called. TV, radio, and newspapers relay the information to the public. This allows people to make voluntary clean air choices and to use a common sense approach to reduce physical activity in order to protect health on bad air days. “EnviroFlash” is an automated notification program that provides a direct e-mail or text message about next day air quality forecasts and *Action!* Days. To enroll, select the “Air Quality Notifications” tab on the “MIair” website.

Visit www.michigan.gov/deqair & select the “MIair” icon

For national and regional ozone maps check out: www.airnow.gov

