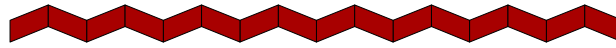




Ozone Action Day Alerts



Office of Safety and Security Fact Sheet

What is ozone?

Ozone is an odorless, colorless gas composed of three atoms of oxygen. Ozone occurs both in the Earth's upper atmosphere and at ground level. Ozone can be good or bad, depending on where it is found:

Good Ozone Ozone occurs naturally in the Earth's upper atmosphere-10 to 30 miles above the Earth's surface-where it forms a protective layer that shields us from the sun's harmful ultraviolet rays. This "good" ozone is gradually being destroyed by manmade chemicals. An area where ozone has been most significantly depleted-for example, over the North or South Pole, is sometimes called a "hole in the ozone."

Bad Ozone In the Earth's lower atmosphere, near ground level, ozone is formed when pollutants emitted by cars, power plants, industrial boilers, refineries, chemical plants, and other sources react chemically in the presence of sunlight. Bad ozone is easily created on hot, sunny days. These pollutants are unhealthy and steps must be taken to avoid creating bad ozone and breathing it in.

When the potential for days with high ozone levels, the Office of Safety and Security will post "Ozone Action Day Alerts" on the FCPSnet under "What's New Today?"

Alerts will be posted before 07:30 on days when the National Weather Service (NWS) and/or Washington Metropolitan Council of Governments (MWCOG) issues a forecast for Fairfax County for the following events or combination of events:

- Heat Advisory - Issued by NWS, when the heat index is likely to reach the danger category.
- Code Red for Ozone - Issued by MWCOG, when the air quality is expected to reach unhealthy levels in the afternoon [Ozone levels between 151-200 parts per billion (ppb)].
- Code Purple for Ozone - Issued by MWCOG, when the air quality is expected to reach very unhealthy levels in the afternoon. [Ozone levels between 201 - 300 parts per billion (ppb)].

Some of the actions that FCPS will implement on these days are:

Heat Advisory - When the heat index is likely to reach the danger category:

All FCPS school based outdoor activity participants and employees should follow precautions to prevent heat related illness. Please follow the below link to the OSS fact sheet on the prevention of heat related illness (<http://www.fcps.edu/fts/safety-security/factsheets/seh-15.pdf>). All High School Outdoor Activities should consult with the school's certified athletic trainer for practice and contest protocols.

Code Red and Purple - When the air quality is expected to reach unhealthy and/or very unhealthy levels:

All outdoor **physical** activity should be suspended between 11:00 am and 6:00 pm: no outdoor recess, no outdoor physical education activities, no outdoor sports activities, no outdoor marching band practice, and no grounds mowing operations (FCPS and contractor operations).

Additionally, all FCPS employees should curtail the fueling of gasoline powered vehicles/maintenance equipment during the day.

If you need assistance, call Richard Michelback in the Safety and Health section at 571-423-2010.