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YMCA Metropolitan Washington Air Quality Alert Guidance

Due to changing weather patterns, Increased threats of wildfires, and volcanic activity that can affect the air quality in the Washington metropolitan area this guidance is to clarify what should happen in the events of Air Quality Alerts being issued for our area.

AQI (Air Quality Index)

The air quality index, or AQI, measures the air quality and level of health concern it presents as measured by the Environmental Protection Agency. The AQI is measured on a scale of 0 to 500. The higher the AQI values, the greater the level of air pollution and health concern there is, according AirNow.gov. Conversely, the lower the AQI values, the air quality is more satisfactory and the health risks are lower.

The EPA determines the AQI values based on five major air pollutants which are regulated by the Clean Air Act:

- Ground-level ozone
- Particle pollution (also known as particulate matter)
- Carbon monoxide
- Sulfur dioxide
- Nitrogen dioxide

According to the National Weather Service, ground-level ozone and airborne particles present the greatest health threat to humans.

Air quality Alert codes and definitions with YMCA response for each code.

CODE GREEN

0-50: Code green air is deemed "good." Air quality is considered satisfactory, and air pollutants pose little to no risk for human health. YMCA Metropolitan Washington Operates on a regular schedule with indoor and outdoor activities.

CODE YELLOW

51-100: Code yellow air is considered "moderate." While this air quality is still regarded as "acceptable," some people may begin to experience health impacts, especially those who are sensitive to air pollution. YMCA Metropolitan Washington Operates on a regular schedule with indoor and outdoor activities.



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CODE ORANGE

101-150: Once the air quality reaches code orange, it has become unhealthy. This color means concern has reached "unhealthy for sensitive groups." Those who are considered sensitive include those with lung diseases, those who have asthma, older people, children, teenagers and those who are active outdoors, according to the NWS. **YMCA Metropolitan Washington Operates on a regular schedule with indoor and outdoor activities. Members and staff participating in outdoor activities are notified of the increase hazards to sensitive populations. Outdoor activities for sensitive groups will be limited to 30 min.**

CODE RED

151-200: When the air quality reaches code red, it is "unhealthy" for everyone. The general public may begin to experience health impacts, while those in sensitive groups will have more serious health effects. **YMCA Metropolitan Washington will operate on a regular schedule with indoor activities. All outdoor activities are cancelled and Members and staff using outdoor amenities (pools, courts, fields and any others) are notified of the increase hazards to sensitive populations**

CODE PURPLE

201-300: Code purple is considered "very unhealthy" Health alerts are generally issued during this color, and the health risk has increased for everyone. **YMCA Metropolitan Washington will operate on a regular schedule with indoor activities. All outdoor activities are cancelled and all outdoor amenities (pools, courts, fields and any others) will be closed until levels return to Red or lower. All staff and members would be encouraged to stay indoors and limit outdoor exposure.**

CODE MAROON

300+: The last is code maroon and is considered "hazardous." This will usually prompt a health warning, and everyone is likely to be affected. **YMCA Metropolitan Washington will operate on a regular schedule with indoor activities. All outdoor activities are cancelled and all outdoor amenities (pools, courts, fields and any others) will be closed until levels return to Red or lower. All staff and members would be encouraged to stay indoors and limit outdoor exposure.**