



Oregon School Activities Association  
25200 SW Parkway Avenue, Suite 1  
Wilsonville, OR 97070  
503.682.6722 fax: 503.682.0960 <http://www.osaa.org>



September 5, 2017

To: Superintendents, Principals, and Athletic Directors  
From: Peter Weber, Executive Director  
Subject: \*Updated\* Recommendations regarding Air Quality

OSAA Staff has been fielding a number of inquiries from member schools this morning about the declining air quality around many areas of our state.

Following new air quality alerts released earlier today from the Oregon DEQ, and after further discussions with the Oregon Health Authority and OSAA medical advisors, the OSAA is updating its recommendations to schools regarding air quality in the Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups range. (see chart below)

**Contests and/or practices shall be canceled or moved indoors in areas that have an AQI or 24-hour average PM<sub>2.5</sub> in the Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups range (orange level).**

While Oregon Health Authority guidelines do allow for light outdoor activities in the orange level, the intensity and duration of high school practices/contests in cross country, soccer and football are not considered light activity by OSAA.

Member schools in regions of the state that do not have an air quality monitor within a reasonable distance, or those within distance of a station that prefer to consider a second factor before making a final decision, should continue to use the 5-3-1 Visibility Index. Be aware that conditions may change rapidly and always use the more conservative of multiple metrics.

**Using the Visibility 5-3-1 Index**

Since wildfires often occur in remote areas, air monitoring equipment may not be available. Smoke levels can rise and fall rapidly, depending on weather conditions, including wind direction. Making visual observations using the 5-3-1 visibility index is a simple way to estimate smoke levels and what precautions to take. While this method can be useful, you should always use caution and avoid going outside if visibility is limited, especially if you are sensitive to smoke.

The procedure for using this visibility index is as follows:

1. Determine the limit of your visual range by looking for distant targets or familiar landmarks such as mountains, mesas, hills, or buildings at known distances. The visual range is that point at which these targets are no longer visible. As a general rule of thumb: if you can clearly see the outlines of individual trees on the horizon it is generally less than five miles away.
2. Ideally, the viewing of any distant targets should be made with the sun behind you. Looking into the sun or at an angle increases the ability of sunlight to reflect off of the smoke, thus making the visibility estimate less reliable.
3. If you are using 24-hr. PM<sub>2.5</sub> in addition to the Visibility 5-3-1 Index, use the more conservative of the two metrics.

We are continuing to consult with health officials and will keep you abreast of additional updates. If you have additional questions, please contact the OSAA office.

24-hr Average PM <sub>2.5</sub>	Air Quality Index	5-3-1 Visibility Index	Required Actions for Outdoor Activities
16-35 µg/m <sup>3</sup>	51 -100	5-15 Miles	Athletes with asthma should have rescue inhalers readily available and pretreat before exercise or as directed by their healthcare provider. All athletes with respiratory illness, asthma, lung or heart disease should monitor symptoms and reduce/cease activity if symptoms arise. Increase rest periods as needed.
36-55 µg/m <sup>3</sup>	101 -150	3-5 Miles	Because they involve strenuous activity for prolonged periods of time, all outdoor activities (practice and competition) shall be canceled or moved to an area with a lower 24-hr. PM <sub>2.5</sub> level or AQI. Move practices indoors if indoor venues are available in your community.
56-150 µg/m <sup>3</sup>	151 -200	1-3 Miles	Because they involve strenuous activity for prolonged periods of time, all outdoor activities (practice and competition) shall be canceled or moved to an area with a lower 24-hr. PM <sub>2.5</sub> level or AQI. Move practices indoors if indoor venues are available in your community.
>151 µg/m <sup>3</sup>	>200	1 Mile	Because they involve strenuous activity for prolonged periods of time, all outdoor activities (practice and competition) shall be canceled or moved to an area with a lower 24-hr. PM <sub>2.5</sub> level or AQI. Move practices indoors if indoor venues are available in your community.