

# TENNESSEE Air Quality Flag Program

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

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Fall 2019

## Announcements & Updates

Welcome to the new quarterly newsletter provided by the Tennessee Air Flags Committee! This newsletter will provide latest announcements and updates, share how other participating sites are incorporating the flag program, and offer various tools and ideas to implement the program at your site.

### New Website!

We have a new and improved Air Quality Flag Program website with information on how to get started with the program, materials and resources available for participating sites in Tennessee. Bookmark it today at:

[www.lung.org/TN-Air-Quality-Flags](http://www.lung.org/TN-Air-Quality-Flags)

## Ozone Season is Upon Us

Higher ozone levels tend to become an issue in most areas of the country from March through November. Ozone at ground level is a harmful air pollutant that forms when pollutants emitted by cars, power plants, industrial boilers, refineries, chemical plants, and other sources react chemically in the presence of heat and sunlight.

### Protect yourself and your community:

- Check the Air Quality Index to find out how much pollution is in the air ([www.airnow.gov](http://www.airnow.gov)) and fly your flags. You can also subscribe to [Enviroflash](#) for automatic email updates of bad air quality days.
- Use the [Activity Guidelines](#) when exercising and working outside.
- Do outdoor activities early in the morning and after 6 pm to avoid the highest ozone levels.
- Pay attention to breathing or lung problems you might have.

## Tennessee School Spotlight: Inglewood Elementary



For Air Quality Awareness Week 2019, Inglewood Elementary in Nashville, TN began flying the air quality flags. Magnet Schools Assistance Program Coordinator at Inglewood, Cherifa McDowell, said “Helping our students, families, staff and neighbors understand the implications of the air quality index fits perfectly with our mission to focus on the environment here at Inglewood Environmental Sciences STEAM Magnet School. With the increase in asthma and asthma-related illnesses, lung and heart disease, air quality awareness is increasingly important to our community each and every day.”

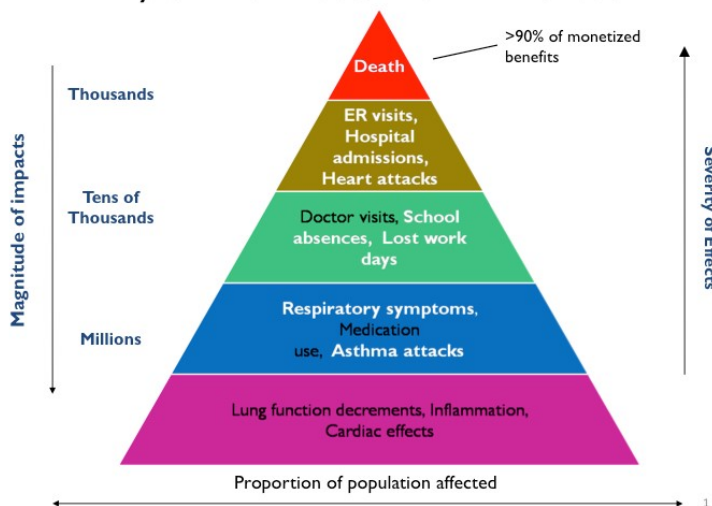
Going above and beyond, Inglewood Elementary staff and students held a flag event to spread awareness about the program to their local community. Local news channels and community partners were invited to attend. The flag event helped students understand the meaning of the colored flags and the importance of protecting their health from air pollution.

**CLICK HERE**  
to plan your own flag event!

Read the full school spotlight [here](#), and [contact us](#) if you are interested in planning a flag event at your school!

## Health Impacts

### A “Pyramid of Effects” from Air Pollution



Air pollution near schools can be a health problem for students, teachers, and staff. Poor outdoor air quality can lead to health problems such as asthma attacks, wheezing and coughing, shortness of breath, headaches, eye irritation, and susceptibility to infections. Young children, teenagers, and people with preexisting respiratory medical conditions are especially vulnerable to air pollution. The types and amount of air pollution vary by your location, the time of day, the temperature, and the weather. Some sources of air pollution are natural such as smoke from wildfires, pollen from plants, dander from pets, or spores from molds. Other sources of air pollution are from burning coal, driving cars and trucks, and incinerating garbage.

## Take Action This Fall: Spread the Word!

The Discovery School in Murfreesboro is including the air quality forecast during their daily news segment that sixth graders broadcast every morning. Students use the Air Quality Index and associated colors to indicate whether it is projected to be a green, yellow, orange, red, or purple day. This alerts students and staff, so they can better determine whether outdoor activities should or should not take place. Check your Air Quality Flag Program toolkit for examples of morning announcements your site could use!

**Don't forget social media!**



*Here's a status your site could post:*

“What is the Air Quality Index? Learn more [here](#), and keep an eye on [SCHOOL NAME]'s colored flag to check on the air quality forecast each day!”

## In the Classroom

Here are some sample classroom activities that could be used to highlight air quality and its impacts.

### What Color is Your Air Today?

[Grades 1-2](#)

[Grades 3-5](#)

These activity sheets will help your students understand the colors of the flags you fly to indicate the daily air quality forecast. These could also be a useful tool for helping students with asthma identify when they may need to watch for respiratory symptoms.

### Will the Air Be Clean Enough to Breathe?

[Grades 7-12](#)

In this unit of 6 classroom activities, students explore the question: Will the air be clean enough to breathe? Students will be guided through the analysis of models and real world data as they explore the factors that affect a region's air quality. This lesson plan is provided in partnership by National Geographic and The Concord Consortium.

## WE ARE HERE TO SUPPORT YOU!

Questions? Contact Christine Hart at [Christine.Hart@lung.org](mailto:Christine.Hart@lung.org) or 423-661-7593  
[www.lung.org/TN-Air-Quality-Flags](http://www.lung.org/TN-Air-Quality-Flags)

