Air Quality Flag Program

Spring 2020 Newsletter

CELEBRATE EARTH DAY 2020!

We celebrate Earth Day on April 22nd, but air pollution can affect your health and the environment every day. We can all take steps to reduce air pollution and help keep the air clean.

Although many of us are practicing social distancing, we've created a list of resources your organization can use as you promote Earth Day activities. Check it out and have fun!

Read the picture book *Why is Coco Orange?*
Create your own reading or post a recorded reading to send to your students:
• Digital version of the Coco book
• EPA Region 6 Coco Reading (English)
• EPA Region 6 Coco Reading (Spanish)

Engage your students with air quality lesson plans
Many of our lessons could be recorded and shared digitally or adapted for your students to do at home. Browse our resources at https://airnow.gov/index.cfm?action=flag_program.classroom.

Play and share Smog City 2, an interactive air pollution simulator for ages 11 and up: http://www.smogcity2.org/.

Share your air quality pics on social media and tag us at #airqualityflagprogram.

HAPPY EARTH DAY FROM THE FLAG PROGRAM TEAM!

INTERACTIVE ACTIVITY: WHY I CARE

Air Quality Awareness Week is coming up, and we're initiating a student engagement campaign, "Why I Care About Clean Air," for you to share with

your class or other children you know. We hope this activity will prompt your students to think creatively about how air quality issues impact their own lives, while being a simple and fun resource that educators and parents can use, especially as classrooms now migrate to distance-learning models. The "Why I Care About Clean Air" activity and instructions can be found at https://airnow.app.cloud.gov/sites/default/files/2020-03/aqaw-poster-template-with-instructions_0.pdf
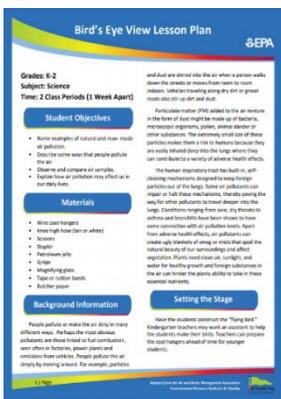
MAY 4-8: AIR QUALITY AWARENESS WEEK

Every year, EPA, National Weather Service, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), U.S. Forest Service, and U.S. Department of State celebrate Air Quality Awareness Week.
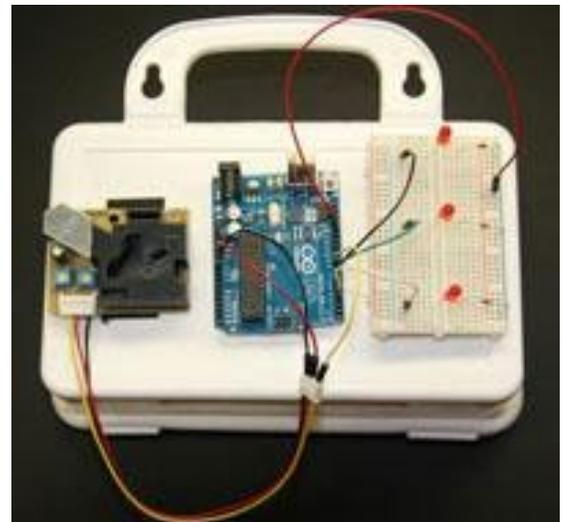
This year's theme of **Better Air, Better Health** promotes events that increase air quality awareness and encourages people to check their daily air quality. The website https://www.airnow.gov/awareness-week will be live on Monday, May 4th.

CALLING ALL TEACHERS

The Bird's Eye View lesson plan follows the current Next Generation Science Standards and most closely aligns with disciplinary core idea (DCI) ESS3.C (Human Impacts on Earth Systems), which is specifically addressed in the Kindergarten and 5th grade curricula.

The Bird's Eye View lesson plan is now available for free through the National Service Center for Environmental Publications (NSCEP) at https://www.epa. gov/nscep by searching for publication 456B19002 or by the title. Note: NSCEP is currently not shipping any printed material, so the ordering function on the website is not working. You can still download and view documents online until they are back in service.

You can also download the lesson, as well as many other lesson plans and outreach materials, at https://airnow.app.cloud.gov/air-quality-flag-program-classroom-curriculum-publications/.

PORTABLE AIR QUALITY SENSORS

For a variety of reasons, not all areas of the country are covered by a federally approved air quality monitor. However, there are options for people who want to monitor the air quality themselves, including lower-cost air sensors that are readily available. The performance of these personal sensors is not equal to that of regulatory monitors, but they can be helpful for learning more about the air quality in your location. EPA's Office of Research and Development (ORD) provides the latest information on how sensors perform and best practices for using them with the Air Sensor Toolbox: https://www.epa.gov/air-sensor-toolbox.

SENSOR VIDEOS

EPA has developed three short videos to help people understand the nature of low-cost sensors and how air quality measurements relate to public health, as well as a PSA to introduce the videos. The videos cover how EPA collects and uses regulatory data, how EPA communicates health messaging, and questions the public can ask themselves as they consider how to use sensors. Check them out in English and Spanish at: https://www.epa.gov/air-sensor-toolbox/videos-air-sensor-measurements-data-quality-and-interpretation.