

SAN MATEO COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT

POOR AIR QUALITY AND RESPONSE PROCEDURES

Protecting Our Community. Staying Informed. Taking Action.



STAY INFORMED

Monitor air quality and local updates.



STAY PREPARED

Know what to do when air quality declines.



STAY SAFE

Protect your health and those around you.



TAKE ACTION

We all play a role in a healthy community.



POOR AIR QUALITY

SMCCCD Poor Air Quality Plan Overview



PURPOSE

Defines procedures for degraded air quality incidents.



WHO IT PROTECTS

Students, faculty, staff, and campus visitors.



HAZARDS COVERED

Wildfire smoke and regional air pollution.



WHAT THE PLAN COVERS

Protective actions, communications, and operational adjustments.



TRAINING POINT: This annex helps the District respond quickly and consistently during poor air quality events.

AIR MONITORING

How SMCCCD tracks air quality conditions



WHO MONITORS?

- Air monitoring is led by Public Safety and/or Emergency Management.
- District conditions are monitored regularly.



ACCEPTED DATA SOURCES



AirNow



IQAir



PurpleAir

- ✓ AirNow is EPA-accepted; SMCCCD also uses local IQAir and PurpleAir data to improve coverage.



DISTRICT MONITORING

- SMCCCD maintains one PurpleAir monitor on each campus.
- Local readings help supplement limited regional monitor coverage.



Live air quality & monitor locations

sites.google.com/my.smccd.edu/smcccdsustainability/hidden-pages/air-quality

THE RELATIVE SIZE OF PARTICLES

From the COVID-19 pandemic to the U.S. West Coast wildfires, some of the biggest threats now are also the most microscopic.

A particle needs to be 10 microns (μm) or less before it can be inhaled into your respiratory tract. But just how small are these specks?



Particles **10 μm or smaller** can be inhaled into the respiratory tract.



The visibility limits for what the naked eye can see hover around **10–40 μm** .



Wildfire smoke can persist in the air for several days, and even months.

DISTRICT RESPONSE LEVELS

Coordinated. Scalable. Always ready.



LEVEL 1

Field Activation

Local response initiated by on-site personnel and resources.



LEVEL 2

Crisis Action Team

Cross-functional team mobilized to assess and manage the situation.



LEVEL 3

Emergency Operations Center

EOC activation for complex and extended response.

PUBLIC SAFETY

LEVEL 2

Crisis Action Team

LEVEL 3

EOC Activation for Complex and Extended Response



OPERATIONAL PERIODS



MORNING CLASSES



MEETING TIME
8:00 PM
(Night Before)



GO / NO GO DECISION
9:00 PM
(Night Before)



AFTERNOON CLASSES



MEETING TIME
7:00 AM



GO / NO GO DECISION
8:00 AM



EVENING CLASSES



MEETING TIME
11:00 AM



GO / NO GO DECISION
12:00 PM

Air Quality Index Chart

AQI COLOR	LEVEL OF CONCERN	AQI RANGE	DESCRIPTION
 Green	Good	0–50	 Air quality is satisfactory and poses little or no risk.
 Yellow	Moderate	51–100	 Air quality is acceptable, though some people unusually sensitive to air pollution may be affected.
 Orange	Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups	101–150	 Sensitive groups may experience health effects; the general public is less likely to be affected.
 Red	Unhealthy	151–200	 Some members of the general public may experience health effects; sensitive groups may experience more serious health effects.
 Purple	Very Unhealthy	201–300	 Health alert; the risk of health effects increases for everyone.
 Maroon	Hazardous	301–500	 Health warning of emergency conditions; everyone is more likely to be affected.



AIR QUALITY IS **BETWEEN 51 – 100**

MODERATE



Moderate

51 – 100



Some people may be
**unusually sensitive to
particle pollution** and may
need to take precautions.



Unusually sensitive people:

Consider reducing prolonged or heavy exertion. Watch for symptoms such as coughing or shortness of breath. These are signs to take it a little easier.



Everyone else:

It's a good day to be
active outside!



STAY INFORMED. STAY PREPARED. TOGETHER, WE KEEP OUR CAMPUS SAFE.



HOW WE COMMUNICATE AIR QUALITY **ORANGE** CONDITIONS (101–150)

When the Air Quality Index (AQI) reaches the **Orange** range (101–150), we take immediate steps to inform our campus community.



HOW CAMPUS CABINETS WILL BE INFORMED



AQI IS MONITORED
CONTINUOUSLY.



WHEN AQI REACHES
101–150 (ORANGE),
AN ALERT IS TRIGGERED.



CAMPUS CABINET MEMBERS
ARE NOTIFIED THROUGH THE
COLLEGE CAT TEXTING GROUPS.



HOW WE GET THE FIRST COMMUNICATION OUT



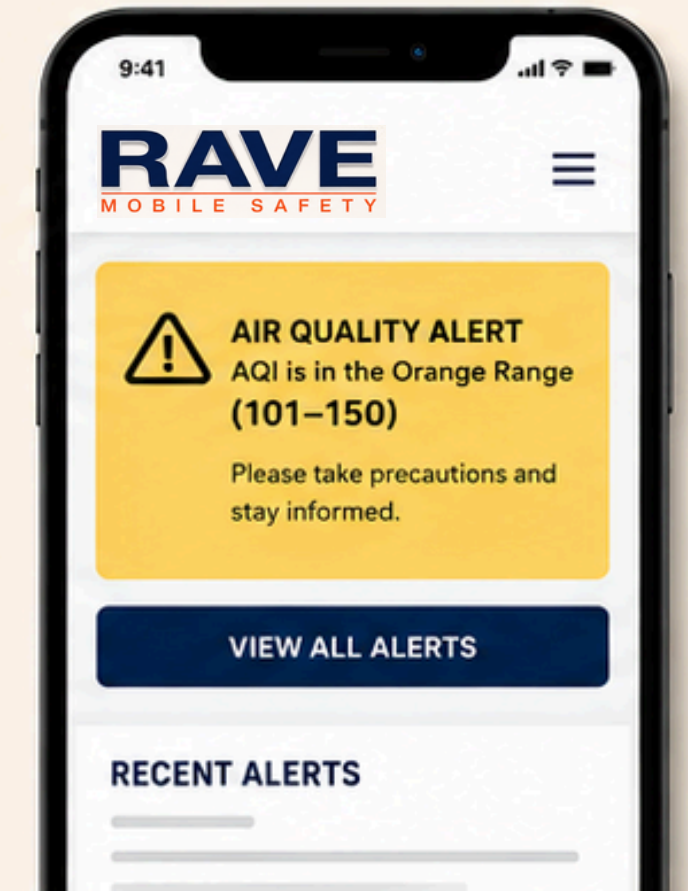
AN ALERT IS SENT TO THE
COLLEGE CAT TEXTING GROUPS.



AN ALERT IS POSTED ON
<https://alerts.smccd.edu/>.



THIS PROVIDES THE FIRST
PUBLIC-FACING COMMUNICATION
FOR THE CAMPUS COMMUNITY.



OUR GOAL: Deliver timely, clear information so our campus community can make informed decisions and stay safe.



WHEN CONDITIONS ARE BETWEEN 101 AND 150 (ORANGE)



Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups

1

ENGINEERING CONTROLS



- Keep filtered buildings enclosed.
- Keep windows, doors, and bays closed except for entry and exit.
- Keep cabin-filtered vehicles closed except for entry and exit.
- Recirculate indoor air and reduce outside air intake when possible.

2

COMMUNICATIONS



- Send an operational message to students, faculty, and staff.
- Notify individuals with special needs through RAVE.
- Use email notification only.

3

ATHLETICS & OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES



- Reduce prolonged outdoor activity for sensitive groups.
- Monitor closely: people with asthma, heart or lung disease, older adults, and children.
- Outdoor contests may continue with monitoring and modifications.
- Program managers should monitor personnel and conditions.

4

CAMPUS & PROGRAM OPERATIONS



- Move outdoor classes and activities indoors when possible.
- Use caution for recreation, intramurals, camps, and Child Center activities.
- Reassign events to indoor facilities when appropriate.
- Limit activities that add air pollution.
- Examples: landscaping equipment, painting, solvents, and sprays.



TRAINING POINT

Orange conditions call for indoor-air protection, clear communication, and extra caution for sensitive groups.



WHEN CONDITIONS ARE BETWEEN **151–200 (RED)**



Unhealthy

1 ACTIVATE CAT



- Convene CAT
- Include PIO, Public Safety, Facilities, EM, HR, ITS, Instruction, Auxiliary Services

2 USE DECISION WINDOWS

	MEET	DECIDE
 Morning	8:00 PM	9:00 PM
 Afternoon	7:00 AM	8:00 AM
 Evening	11:00 AM	12:00 PM

3 OUTDOOR ACTIVITY



- Postpone, cancel, or relocate outdoor events
- Outdoor practices / programs only at director discretion

4 RELOCATE TO CLEANER AIR



- Move classes / work from unfiltered to filtered spaces
- Use preplanned smoke refuge sites
- Send relocation notices through RAVE

5 PROTECT ESSENTIAL SERVICES



- Use engineering controls first
- Adjust work schedules / intensity if needed
- N95 is minimum recommended protection
- Send RAVE message by email



TRAINING POINT:

Red conditions require leadership coordination, decision windows, indoor relocation, and strong protection for outdoor and essential operations.



WHEN CONDITIONS ARE BETWEEN 201–300

PURPLE – VERY UNHEALTHY

1



ACTIVATE CAT

Call Critical Action Team (CAT) meeting.

2

MAINTAIN OPERATIONAL PERIODS

OPERATION	TIME OF MEETING	TIME GO/NO GO DECISION DELIVERED
 Morning Classes	8:00 PM (Night Before)	9:00 PM (Night Before)
 Afternoon Classes	7:00 AM	8:00 AM
 Evening Classes	11:00 AM	12:00 PM

3



PAUSE INSTRUCTION & NON-ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS

- Chancellor/President may discontinue operations.
- Allow for site differences and safe shutdowns.
- Consider special circumstances such as labs, exams, and time-sensitive work.

4



EMERGENCY COMMUNICATION

Send an **EMERGENCY** message to students, faculty, and staff via RAVE.



EMAIL



SMS



SAFETY FIRST. DECISIONS MAY CHANGE BASED ON CONDITIONS.



MAROON AIR QUALITY WHEN CONDITIONS ARE BETWEEN 301–500

HAZARDOUS – EVERYONE IS MORE LIKELY TO BE AFFECTED

1



ACTIVATE EOC

The Emergency Operations Center (EOC) will be activated.



This will be a stop for all functions, except essential services.

2

MAINTAIN OPERATIONAL PERIODS

OPERATION	TIME OF MEETING	TIME GO/NO GO DECISION DELIVERED
 Morning Classes	8:00 PM (Night Before)	9:00 PM (Night Before)
 Afternoon Classes	7:00 AM	8:00 AM
 Evening Classes	11:00 AM	12:00 PM

3



EOC DETERMINES COURSE OF ACTION

The EOC will monitor conditions and determine the appropriate course of action.

- ✓ Evaluate air quality data and forecasts
- ✓ Assess campus and community impacts
- ✓ Communicate decisions and next steps

4



EMERGENCY COMMUNICATION

Send an **EMERGENCY** message to students, faculty, and staff via RAVE.



EMAIL



SMS



SAFETY FIRST. DECISIONS MAY CHANGE BASED ON CONDITIONS.

BEST SMOKE REFUGE BUILDINGS



Recommended refuge locations by campus

These buildings offer the best protection from smoke during emergencies due to their safety features and locations.

CAÑADA COLLEGE



Cañada College

- ✓ Strategic locations on campus
- ✓ Strong building construction

COLLEGE OF SAN MATEO



College of San Mateo

- ✓ Central campus locations
- ✓ Modern infrastructure & safety systems

SKYLINE COLLEGE



Skyline College

- ✓ Central campus refuge locations
- ✓ Modern, enclosed buildings



YOUR SAFETY. OUR PRIORITY.
In the event of smoke or fire, move to the nearest smoke refuge building and follow emergency procedures.

THANK YOU!

YOUR PREPAREDNESS MAKES A DIFFERENCE.

Together, we can create a safer campus for everyone. Stay informed, stay prepared, and look out for one another.



BE PREPARED.

Know the plan.
Have the tools.



BE A LEADER.

Help others.
Share knowledge.



STAY ALERT.

Know your
surroundings.



STAY SAFE.

Your safety
is our priority.



BE PREPARED. BE A LEADER.

YOUR GO BAG. YOUR TEAM. EVERYONE'S SAFETY.



*Preparedness today
protects tomorrow.*

