

City of Orem – Clean Air Policy

November 4, 2014

Purpose

Poor air quality has a direct impact upon the health of our residents and upon economic development in the City of Orem. During the winter season, temperature inversions occur when warm air acts as a lid on the valley and traps cold air near the valley floor. This in turn traps pollutants in the cold air. These inversions can escalate health conditions and act as a deterrent as the city works to attract new businesses to the area.

The purpose of this policy is to provide city employees guidance as we work together to do our part to improve air quality. This policy identifies action items to be implemented by employees during action days which include Yellow-Air days and Red-Air days as identified by the Utah Division of Air Quality (UDAQ). It is important to note that Yellow-Air days require as much attention as Red-Air days because action taken during a Yellow-Air day may prevent a Red-Air day from occurring.

Action Days

Action days are in effect when a Yellow-Air day or Red-Air day is identified by the UDAQ. Action items are to be implemented by city employees on action days.

Yellow-Air and Red-Air days are determined by the UDAQ. Current and forecasted conditions can be found on the UDAQ website and on an application that can be downloaded to smart phones and tablets.

Action Items

1. Action Day Alerts: An employee designated by the City Manager will be responsible to monitor the UDAQ current and forecasted conditions. The employee is to send out communication to all city employees identifying current and possible upcoming action days so that employees can make plans ahead of time to implement other action items.
2. Public Notification: The employee designated by the City Manager is to use city social media to remind residents of Yellow-Air and Red-Air days and to encourage residents to participate in activities that reduce air pollution. Such activities include trip reduction, trip consolidation, reduced cold engine starts, and reduced engine idling.

To assist with education of the public regarding air quality, the city will fly an EPA air quality flag at the city center building. One employee will be assigned the duty of monitoring daily air quality and flying the appropriate flag.

3. Anti-Idling: During Yellow-Air and Red-Air days, the idling of city vehicles is not permitted unless under emergency circumstances or with prior approval from a department director.

Anti-Idling signs will be installed in city parking lots and anti-idling stickers will be installed in all city vehicles to remind employees of this policy.

4. Trip Reduction: Employees are encouraged to reduce vehicle trips during Yellow-Air and Red-Air days. As defined by each Department Director, non-vital work tasks requiring vehicles should be delayed and completed on a day with better air quality. Additionally, employees are encouraged to consolidate multiple trips into a single trip to reduce the number of vehicle cold-starts. A cold-start generates higher emissions because the emissions-control equipment has not yet reached its optimal operating temperature (source: fhwa.dot.gov). This policy does not apply to vehicles providing emergency response.
5. Carpool: Employees are encouraged to carpool to work year round, but especially on Yellow-Air and Red-Air days.
6. Employee Lunch: Employees are encouraged to bring lunch to work, or to walk to lunch on Yellow-Air and Red-Air days, which will create a reduction in vehicle trips.
7. Fitness Points: As an incentive to attract employee participation, fitness points will be awarded to employees that participate in implementing action items on Yellow-Air and Red-Air days. A new section shall be added to the fitness point program to reflect action items. Fitness points may be awarded for walking to lunch, bringing a lunch from home, using public transportation or a carpool to travel to and from work, walking to work, or biking to work.
8. Public Transportation: Employees are encouraged to use public transportation on Yellow-Air and Red-Air days to commute to and from work.

Employees interested in using Frontrunner to commute are eligible to utilize a city carpool vehicle to travel to and from the Orem Central Station and city offices. The vehicle can be left overnight at the Orem Central Station.

9. Refueling: Employees are encouraged to avoid refueling city-owned vehicles during Yellow-Air and Red-Air days in order to reduce VOCs diffusing into the air. If refueling is needed, it should be done in the afternoon or evening hours when sunlight is not as strong.