



Happy Holidays from all of us here at YCPARMIA. As the holidays gear up into full swing, we'd like to take a moment to express our gratitude for the wonderful members and dedicated public servants we have the pleasure of partnering with and serving. You make our efforts that much more rewarding!

Be AIR Aware

How to Protect Yourself and Your Family From Air Pollution

There are two air pollutants that cause health problems for our region: ozone and particulate matter. Ozone, also known as smog, is predominant in the summer months. But in the winter, we see higher levels of particulates. The types of particulates we are most concerned with are those less than 2.5 microns in diameter. That's equivalent to 1/30th the size of the width of a human hair.

These fine particulates are small enough to bypass the body's natural defenses and lodge deep in your lungs or even get into your bloodstream. Those particularly susceptible to health effects from higher fine particulate levels include children, the elderly and those with pre-existing lung ailments such as asthma.

On days when there are elevated pollution levels, these sensitive groups should reduce heavy outdoor exertion (including exercise, play and some types of work). You can sign up to receive e-mail or text message alerts when the air quality is unhealthy for sensitive groups through the Yolo-Solano Air Quality Management District's EnviroFlash service. Sign up at ysaqmd.enviroflash.info.

You can also help keep pollution levels lower by avoiding use of your fireplace or woodstove on calm, dry and mild days. Yolo-Solano AQMD runs the **Don't Light Tonight** program from November through February. Through EnviroFlash, the Air District calls Don't Light Tonight advisories when weather conditions are likely to trap particulate pollution in neighborhoods. These advisories request that residents do not burn wood for 24 hours.

The daily Don't Light Tonight status can also be found at ysaqmd.org or by calling (530) 757-3787.





Space Heater 101

According to the NFPA, heating equipment was involved in over 57,000 home structure fires in 2010 and associated in the deaths of 490 people. On average, portable and stationary space heaters accounted for just over one-third of these fires. Whether the space heater is at home or at work, taking these precautions can minimize the risks:

- ◆ Ensure your space heater is in good repair with no cord damage. Damaged units should be replaced. Aside from being more energy efficient, newer space heaters have a safety switch that automatically turns off the unit if it is knocked over.
- ◆ Choose a heater with infrared or proximity sensors that will turn the heater off when an object comes too close.
- ◆ Avoid using an extension cord with your space heater. If you must, check the manual for the appropriate gauge to use and ensure the cord you want to use is rated heavy enough.
- ◆ When choosing a place for your space heater, find a location on the ground that is located far from any combustible materials such as paper, files, or boxes. Do not place anything on top of the unit's cord that could cause the cord to overheat.
- ◆ Do not use heaters in wet or damp places unless they are specifically certified for that purpose. Dampness causes corrosion that can cause fires or create a shock hazard.
- ◆ Lastly, remember to turn space heaters off whenever leaving the area!

Driving In The Rain

Wet weather driving demands gentle use of all the main controls - steering, clutch, brake and accelerator - and a larger allowance for errors and emergencies.

When you begin a journey in rain, your shoes will be wet and liable to slip off the pedals. Scuff the soles on the rubber matting or carpeting of your car before you start the engine. All motorists should regularly check that their wipers, headlights, tail lights, brake lights and turn signals are working properly. Windshield wipers become brittle and cracked in the summer sun and the beginning of Winter is an ideal time to replace them.

Cruise control should never be used in the rain, as it is designed to apply continuous power to your wheels and keep them spinning. This can be very dangerous on wet roads where drivers must react quickly to hydroplaning, skids, or another driver's loss of control of their vehicle.

Check your tires. Bald tires significantly reduce your traction on wet roadways, and offer little resistance to hydroplaning. When your tires run over water, the water is displaced and it needs somewhere to go quickly. The best place is between the treads of your tires. If your tires are bald, the water has no place to go and you end up riding on a layer of water (hydroplaning).

On the freeway, avoid unnecessary lane changes since water tends to build up between the tire ruts in the lanes. Leave lots of space between you and the car in front because it takes longer to stop. Make sure you add extra space in wet weather so that if you need to break suddenly, your tires won't lock up and cause you to hit the car in front of you.

