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What Is your AQI?

Did you know that you can check the air quality today by looking on a website? It is easy to do and the Air Quality Index (AQI) will help you plan your day if you have health problems that make it hard to breathe some days.



So here is how you start:

DEQ Site

On the Internet, go to the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality's MIAIR site:
<http://www.deqmiair.org/>

You will see a map of Michigan with lots of colored dots.

1. What do the dots represent?
2. What do the colors of the dots tell you?
3. What is the color of the dot closest to where you live? What does that mean about air quality conditions?
4. Are there any places in the state where the air quality isn't good? Where?
5. Look to the left of the map. What do the colors mean in the "Latest AQI Information" section?
6. Click on one of the cities, then click on a specific monitoring station location on the next screen. This leads you to some graphs. What information is found in the graphs?

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7. Click on “ozone maps”. Select the monitoring location closest to your home and look at the graph for ozone, but note that ozone levels are available only between May and September. You can check on ozone levels for other days by clicking to the right of “today” to select another time. What does the graph tell you about ozone levels throughout the day?

8. Click on “PM_{2.5} maps”. Select the monitoring location closest to your home and look at the graph for particle pollution. What does that tell you about particle pollution levels throughout the day?

U.S. EPA Site

9. Now go to: Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) AIRNow website at <http://www.airnow.gov/>. You will see the national air quality map. How does our air quality index forecast levels compare with the rest of the United States today?

10. Click on “Current AQI”. How does this compare with the air quality “Forecast”?

11. Click on “AQI Animation”. How does the AQI change throughout the day?

12. Click on “U.S. Air Quality Summary” and select “Michigan”. Pick a city. What are the current conditions there today?

13. How does the air quality today compare with the air quality yesterday in the city that you picked?