



# **EnviroFlash Update**

## **NACAA Public Outreach Committee**

*John E. White*

**June 13th, 2023**

<https://www.enviroflash.info/>

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[EnviroFlash Challenge](#)

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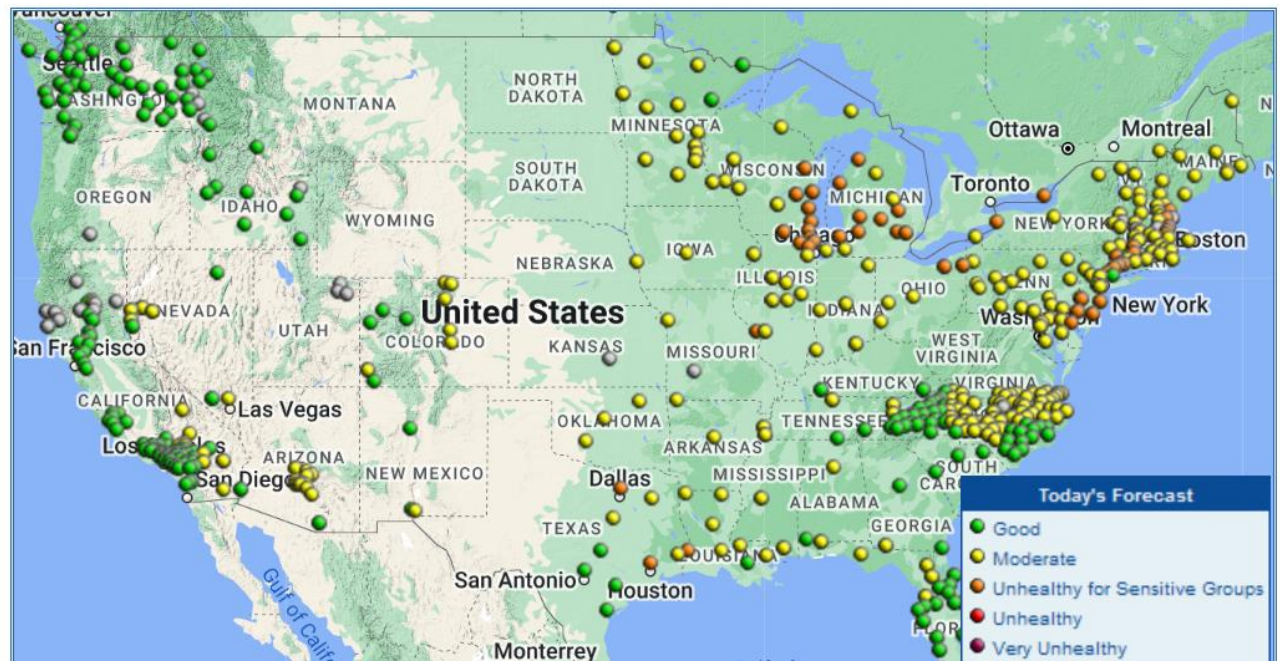
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**Welcome to EnviroFlash!** Air quality affects how you live and breathe. Like the weather, it can change from day to day, or even hour to hour. Up-to-date information allows you to make decisions based on air quality forecasts. EnviroFlash comes to you through a partnership between the US EPA and your state or local air quality agency - notifying you about air quality so you don't have to go searching for it!



- **Free email/”Text” service:**
  - ✓ Public (could include schools, asthma coalitions, media etc.)
  - ✓ State/local agencies
- **Partnership between EPA and State/local/tribal air agencies**
  - ✓ Not just an EPA tool...
- **SLTs control a lot of the message/text**
  - ✓ EnviroFlash administration module in AirNow-Tech
- **Users get air quality forecasts and action day notifications as well as real-time messages**
  - ✓ if enabled for that reporting area...

- **EnviroFlash debuted in late 2004**
- **Individuals select AQI levels to be notified**
  - ✓ Forecasts (real-time alerts if enabled)
- **Once setup by the user, EnviroFlash is automatic**
  - ✓ User must configure each subscribed city
- **SLTs can send instant email if needed**
- **SLTs can track statistics**

# City Signup for User

## City Selection

[Change City](#)

Nearest EnviroFlash City: **Chatham County, NC**

## Email Preferences

### Format

HTML  Text Only  Short

Receive Action Day Notifications:

Receive Forecasts:

Receive Current Conditions:

### Select minimum level at which to receive daily forecast Emails

Forecasts	Current	AQI Values	Levels	Colors
<input checked="" type="radio"/>		0-50	Good (receive daily forecast)	Green
<input type="radio"/>		51-100	Moderate	Yellow
<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	101-150	Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups	Orange
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	151-200	Unhealthy	Red



# Example EnviroFlash email

## Ozone Action Day



Texas Commission on Environmental Quality <enviroflash@airnowtech.org>

To ● White, JohnE

Retention Policy 10 years (Capstone approach) (10 years)

Expires 5/28/2033

If there are problems with how this message is displayed, click here to view it in a web browser.



**A(n) Ozone Action Day has been declared for Houston, TX, on Wednesday, May 31**

### Today and Tomorrow's Forecast

Wednesday, May 31:	Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups	<b>Orange</b>	Ozone
Thursday, Jun 1:	Moderate	<b>Yellow</b>	Ozone

### Extended Forecast

- **EnviroFlash administration module in AirNow-Tech**
  - ✓ developed in Cold Fusion (quasi unsupported technology)
    - ❖ No resources over the past decade+ to recode/develop
  - ✓ Sometimes have issues with spam global blacklists with major Internet Service Providers
  - ✓ Lot of agency customization available but difficult onboarding new agencies and overall upkeep (e.g., reporting area changes)
  - ✓ Email bounce-backs an issue and managing this is difficult
  - ✓ Account security on enviroflash.info could use improvement and/or password protection
  - ✓ We are adding Cancel All option for pending EnviroFlash alerts

- **Email notifications in general....**
  - ✓ Societal shift from emails to instant device services
  - ✓ Timeliness issue for the end-user
    - ❖ Spam folders
    - ❖ late email send outs happen periodically due to volume
  - ✓ Several steps needed to get the actual information
    - ❖ checking your email at the right time
    - ❖ Smartphones and apps more effectively deliver notifications than email
- **EPA adding forecast notifications to its AirNow app soon to explore transitioning from email**



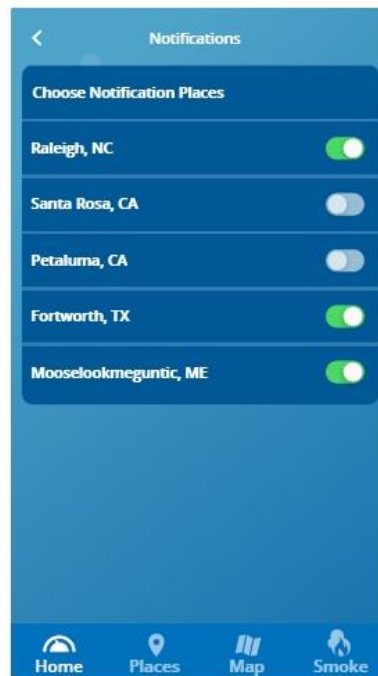
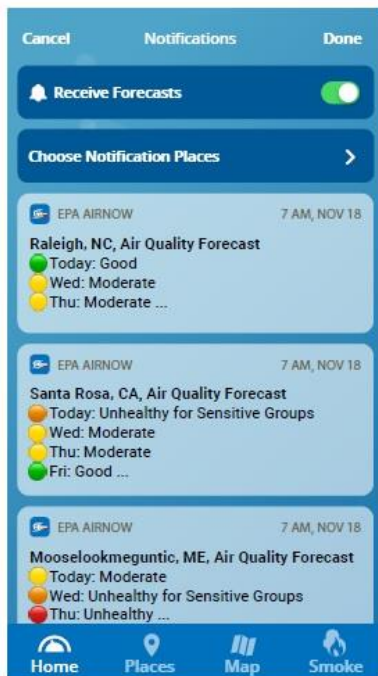
- **AirNow App changes**

- ✓ Notifications (forecast only at this time) are controlled by the users based on their own personal settings
- ✓ If successful, EPA will explore incorporating real-time data notifications
- ✓ Also investigate what customization we could include to App notifications from the existing EnviroFlash Administration module in AirNow-Tech
  - ❖ Due to streamlined messaging in App notifications, the amount of customization/end-user messaging would be limited

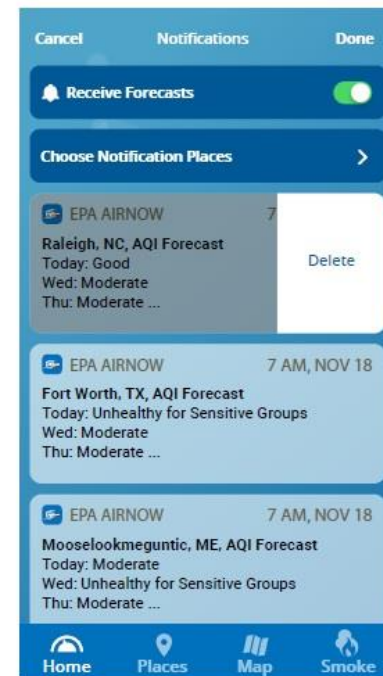
# AirNow App Future Changes



Notifications screen with notifications turned off. Toggle displays the Choose Places card and notifications.



Tap "Choose Places" to reach this screen. Switches turn on or off for each city in your places list.



Places can be deleted by swiping to reveal the delete button.

# AirNow App Future Changes

**Interactions Management button will be shown after six (6) notifications to help prevent users from deleting the app if they become overwhelmed with notifications**



- **EnviroFlash will largely be unchanged for several years**
- **EnviroFlash is on a dated platform that will have to be replaced around 5 years out at considerable expense**
- **Aim to move as much of EnviroFlash functionality to the AirNow app**
  - ✓ Next year we will explore real time alert notifications
    - ❖ This will be very complex
    - ❖ The key will be handling things like notification overload
    - ❖ Commuting/traveling across reporting areas is extremely tricky
- **We think it will take several years to get this balance sorted out**
  - ✓ During this time EnviroFlash will be unaffected
  - ✓ After the notifications system is tested and proven, we will get more serious about figuring options and next steps