

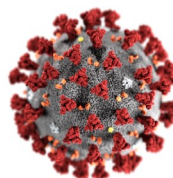
BEAR *in* MIND



Health and Wellness

Centers for Disease Control & Prevention Updates COVID-19 Guidance and Recommendations

The University of Northern Colorado follows COVID-19 guidance and recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment.



Updated Recommendations: On March 1, 2024, the CDC transitioned away from providing specific COVID-19 guidance to a more general [Respiratory Virus Guidance](#). The new guidance addresses the risk and prevention of several common respiratory viruses, including COVID-19, influenza and RSV. Core prevention steps and strategies include:

- **Staying up to date with vaccination** to protect people against serious illness, hospitalization, and death. This includes flu, COVID-19, and RSV if eligible.
- **Practicing good hygiene** by covering coughs and sneezes, washing or sanitizing hands often, and cleaning frequently touched surfaces.
- **Taking steps for cleaner air**, such as bringing in more fresh outside air, purifying indoor air, or gathering outdoors.

UNC faculty, staff and students should following the guidelines and recommendations listed below.

IF YOU HAVE SYMPTOMS

If you are experiencing symptoms of a respiratory illness (fever, chills, fatigue, cough, runny nose and headache) consider the following additional precautions:

- **Stay home if you are ill:** For individuals with symptoms and/or a fever, stay away from others until it has been 24 hours since symptoms are getting better, and you no longer have a fever (without the use of fever-reducing medication).
- **Consider wearing a mask,** particularly if you live or work around people who have [risk factors for severe illness](#): When worn by a person with an infection, masks reduce the spread of the virus to others. Masks can also protect wearers from breathing in germs.
- **Consider getting tested** so you can decide what to do next, like getting treatment to reduce your risk of severe illness.

While UNC no longer offers free COVID test kits or KN95 masks, both are still widely available via various pharmacies and other retailers. Additionally, [UNC's Student Health Center](#) can administer both rapid and PCR tests for COVID, strep and influenza (applicable visit copays apply). Individuals can also reach out to their regular medical provider to explore treatment options.

For more information visit [UNC COVID-19 Information](#)

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Dates to Remember

- April 19- Colorado Arbor Day
- April 22- Earth Day
- April 26- National Arbor Day
- April 26- Last Day of Classes
- April 27- Drug Take Back Day
- April 29-May 3- Finals Week
- May 3 & 4- Commencement
- May 12- Mother's Day
- May 27- Memorial Day (Campus Closed)
- June 14- Flag Day
- June 16- Father's Day
- June 19- Juneteenth (Campus Closed)

Safe Thought

"Before you do it, take time to think through it!"

National Mental Health Awareness Month

During May, organizations such as the [National Alliance on Mental Illness \(NAMI\)](#), [Mental Health American \(MHA\)](#), and many others are working to raise awareness of mental health. Each year, millions of Americans face the reality of living with a mental health illness. While we spend a lot of time paying attention to our physical wellbeing such as what we eat, exercise, and regular check-ups, many people forget that mental health is just as important to a person's well-being as physical health. Individuals do not take care of their mental and emotional needs due of the everyday demands of life. Mental health is very important and impacts everything that we do and how we react to different situations. In the U.S. alone 1 in 5 adults experience mental illness and 1 in 25 adults experience serious mental illness. There are many places that someone who is struggling with daily stress, a traumatic event or even a more serious condition can acquire assistance. UNC offers a variety of services through the [Counseling Center](#). Counseling services are located at Cassidy Hall, and students, faculty, and staff can call (970) 351-2496 to make an appointment or drop in Monday through Friday between 1 p.m. and 4 p.m. Also, the [Colorado Crisis Service](#) is a free service that anyone can utilize. It is a service that provides someone to talk to in a confidential and safe environment. To contact Colorado Crisis Service call (844) 493-8255 or text the word "TALK" to 38255. There are things we can do in your own lives to help improve our mental health. Limiting the use of drugs and alcohol is one big step to take. Taking these substances to feel better generally causes more problems. Finding a stable routine with work and school life can help anyone feel less overwhelmed. Be sure to set aside time for studying and time to relax and refocus. It is important to be realistic of your needs and know your limits. In addition, make sure to schedule some time to move, get up and go for a walk or spend some time at the gym. A minimum of 30 minutes of activity each day is critical to mental health.



Safety/Fire Focus

What is Colorado Safety Stop?

As of April 2022, Colorado allows bicyclists to perform the "Safety Stop" at intersections. The Safety Stop gives people on bikes and other "low speed conveyances" the legal option to ride slowly through stop signs without stopping first, as long as they are yielding right of way to pedestrians and other road users who have the right-of-way. Bicyclists and users of low-speed conveyances may also proceed at red lights after coming to a complete stop, if there is no oncoming traffic.

Bicyclists and low-speed conveyance users can approach intersections at a reasonable speed and choose to apply the Safety Stop or continue to perform a traditional stop at both stop signs and red lights. Only bicyclists ages 15 and over may perform the Safety Stop. Younger riders may do so when they are with a parent or legal guardian.

How does the Safety Stop affect right of way rules?

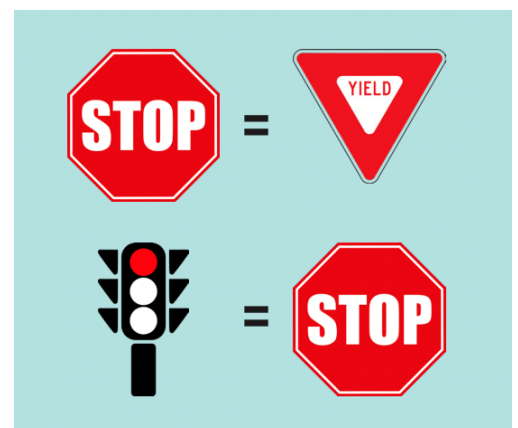
The principles of Right-of-Way are based on the understanding of who has the right to go first. At a stop sign, the traffic that is arriving at the intersection first has priority. At a stop light, it's the traffic that has the green light that has priority. The Safety Stop does not change Colorado's right-of-way rules in any way. People on bikes may only proceed through stop signs and red lights when no others have the right of way.

What is a low-speed conveyance?

Simply put, low-speed conveyances are small profile, low-speed vehicles that people use for transportation and recreation. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Bicycles and electric bicycles
- Electric scooters (not including mopeds)
- "One wheels"
- Wheelchairs

For additional information visit [Colorado Safety Stop](#).



Cause of the Summer Gasoline Changes in Denver/Front Range

This summer Colorado residents in the Denver/Front Range area could see an increase in gas prices. The cause of this increase is due to the Front Range being set to become the latest region required to sell reformulated gasoline. This comes after decades of failing to meet federal air pollution standards. This federal mandate aims to address metro Denver's persistent smog problems. This mandate affects regions that are considered "severe" ozone violators. In the past, the Denver region was considered a "serious" violator but with the amount of smog being produced it will be upgraded to the "severe" designation. The region was designated "serious" in 2019 giving optimal time to try and resolve the issue but sadly the amount of smog has increased.

So what does that mean for the residents? Congress established a program to require remixed fuel in high-ozone areas when it updated the U.S. Clean Air Act in 1990. In short, gas stations will be required to only carry reformulated gasoline. The affected areas include nine counties stretching from Greeley to Castle Rock. Reformulated gasoline is a cleaner fuel blended to emit fewer smog ingredients.

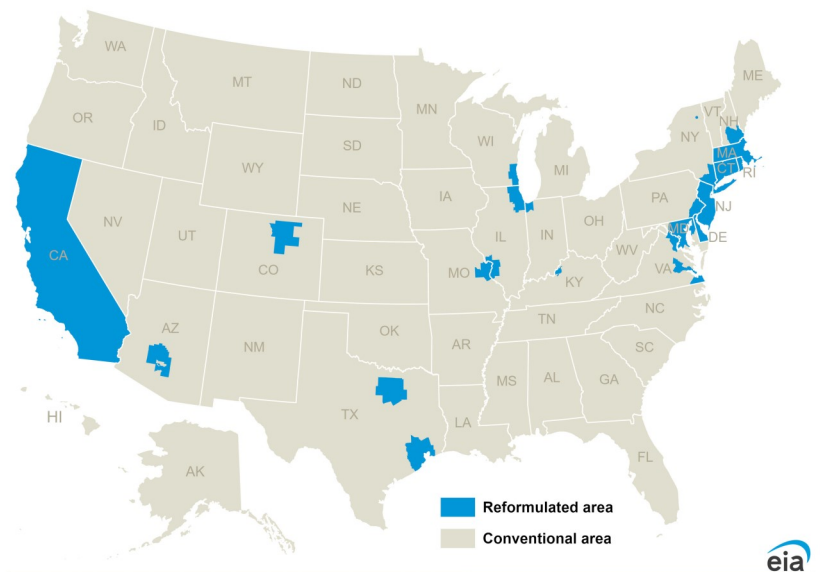
Now the question I'm sure most of everyone is asking is whether this gas is more expensive. Yes, reformulated gasoline is consistently more expensive than traditional fuel but the process can differ depending on the amount available from local refineries and other market factors. In 2021, federal data shows that reformulated regular-grade fuel costs about 36 cents more per gallon compared to conventional gasoline nationwide. As of last week March 4th, 2024, the price gap is about 30 cents per gallon. These prices of course could vary depending on location. The Denver Metro Chamber of Commerce states that prices could be nearly 50 cents per gallon after the mandate goes into effect. This gas will primarily be produced by Suncor Energy, a Canadian oil and gas company that operates an oil and gas refinery in Colorado. Michael Paules a Colorado-based associate director with the American Petroleum Institute said "Suncor likely wouldn't be able to meet the demand for the cleaner gasoline on its own". So if the fuel mixture can't be piped in from other states, he expects the front range could periodically experience higher prices than the rest of the state.

The governor's office has asked the federal government to reconsider the mandate but that is unlikely to get approved. After a string of hazy summers along the front range, the federal government is ready to step in. EPA regional spokesperson Richard Mylott says "There's no ambiguity in federal law: Any region earning the classification must sell reformulated gas. The Clean Air Act does not provide for either a delay or a waiver of this statutory obligation".

Now to the next question, will reformulated gasoline help with ozone pollution? The answer is yes but the effect might be small. The regional air council estimates local sources along the Front Range emit about 500 tons of ozone precursors on an average summer day. Computer models show a switch to reformulated gasoline would avoid about 5 tons of daily emissions which is about one percent of the total. This model however is not precise enough to explain the effect of individual policies, reformulated gasoline, or stricter regulations on drilling sites.

Visit [Reformulated Gasoline Covered Areas](#) for more information.

Reformulated gasoline areas



Spring Stormwater

After a long winter, it's finally turning into spring! With the upcoming changing of the seasons and arrival of spring, we will all start venturing out to yards and outdoor spaces and start fertilizing lawns, cleaning up yard waste that accumulated during the winter, cleaning the grime off vehicles that comes with snow, and maybe picking up some of that dog poop that we've been putting off because it was too cold outside.

But beware, what you do in the yard can directly impact our local waterbodies and negatively impact aquatic habitats, such as the Cache la Poudre River. We all know that spring is the rainy season in Colorado, and with the rain comes the increased potential to carry what's on the lawn to our streams, lakes, and rivers. So as you start spring cleaning, keep these couple of things in mind to protect our local waterways, and remember, only rain (and snow) down the drain!

For additional tips and information pertaining to stormwater, please visit [Greeley Stormwater](#).

World Environment Day

World Environment Day is held every year on June 5th and was first implemented by the United Nation on June 5, 1972. It's been used as a global platform to raise environmental awareness and ecosystem restoration.

Each year this day is hosted by a different country where the official celebrations will take place. The World Environment Day will be hosted this year by The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. With over 150 countries participating, the focus for this year is on land restoration, desertification, and drought resilience.

The UN partners are governments, businesses, civil society, schools, celebrities, cities, and communities, raising awareness and celebrating environmental action. Whether it's to make policy changes to involve communities to care for the planet, with this platform you can do your part by making a commitment to recycle, plant a tree, and/or volunteering with your local communities to promote environmental awareness.

For more information: [World Environment Day](#)

WHEN IT RAINS, IT DRAINS. AND IT HAS TO GO SOMEWHERE
Water from inside our homes goes to a wastewater facility for purification. But water from roofs, streets, and outdoor spigots goes untreated directly into storm drains – straight to our waterways – picking up all kinds of contaminants along the way!

DID YOU KNOW Excess nutrients, specifically nitrogen and phosphorus, pollute stormwater run-off from urban areas, contributing to the third greatest cause of lake deterioration in the US.

DID YOU KNOW The amount of phosphorus in grass clippings from mowing your lawn just once can produce up to 100 lbs. of unwanted algae if it ends up in our lakes and ponds.

DID YOU KNOW Leaf "litter" and landscape trash accounts for 56% of phosphorus in urban stormwater, not to mention clogging storm drains, causing potential flooding and increasing debris in our waterways.

DID YOU KNOW Just one pound of fertilizer over-application on the average lawn can equate to 34.2 lbs. of excess algae growth in streams and lakes.

DID YOU KNOW When you wash your car in the driveway, you're washing about 120 gallons of grime-filled water downstream. The soap, together with the dirt, grease and grime flows untreated into nearby storm drains, which runs directly into lakes and streams.

DID YOU KNOW If dog owners don't clean up after their pooches, 390 million pounds of poop can wash into our waterways every year just in Colorado! Dog waste contains 10% phosphates and 2% nitrates, contributing to algae growth.

WHY IT MATTERS
Too many nutrients in streams and lakes cause rapid growth of algae.
Algae looks bad, smells bad, degrades water quality and can be harmful to your health.
As algae decays, it uses up oxygen in the water, leading to a decline in our drinking water quality – and makes it more expensive to treat.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

Dispose Properly

- Compost or bag your leaves and lawn clippings
- Don't blow leaves or lawn clippings into the street
- Sweep up any spills or overspray of fertilizers on sidewalks or streets

Fertilize Efficiently

- Always follow the manufacturer's application recommendations. More isn't better!
- Fertilizing in the early fall promotes healthy root systems – leading to stronger, more resilient lawns and plants

Be Car Smart

- Use a commercial car wash, where water is recycled and sent to treatment facilities
- Wash your car on the lawn or gravel
- Dump your soapy bucket in the sink

Pick It Up & Pitch It

- Clean up dog waste and dispose properly

CSC
COLORADO STORMWATER COUNCIL
For more information and tips to preserve our waterways, visit colorado-stormwater-council.org

Bear in Mind (BIM) is a publication brought to you by your campus Environmental Health and Safety Department (EHS). We are interested in your thoughts and submissions. Contact the [Environmental Health and Safety](#) department at 970-351-1149. Suggestions can also be sent by campus mail attention EHS, Campus Box 57. Bear in Mind issues are published every quarter. Find current and archived issues on-line at the [EHS Website](#).



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It is the mission of the Environmental Health and Safety Department to support university functions by promoting a safe and healthy campus environment for students, faculty, staff and visitors, as well as to provide professional guidance and direction toward compliance with University, Federal, State and local rules and regulations.