



Spare the Air Alert

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Tomorrow is another Spare the Air Day in the Bay Area

SAN FRANCISCO - Today the Bay Area Air Quality Management District issued the second *Spare the Air* advisory for ozone in 2009.

Air quality in the Bay Area is forecast to be unhealthy tomorrow, Tuesday, April 21. There is no free transit tomorrow and there is no wood-burning ban in place. The *Spare the Air* Alert issued yesterday and today's alert are both prior to the official start of the 2009 Spare the Air summer season which begins May 11. The Air District encourages residents to drive less and reduce their energy use.

"Smog levels are forecast to be unhealthy again tomorrow," said Jack Broadbent, executive officer of the Bay Area Air District. "We are asking Bay Area residents to commit to carpooling or transit to reduce the single largest source of summertime air pollution. Reducing the number of single passenger vehicles on roadways, will significantly improve air quality in the region."

Driving, mowing and fertilizing the lawn, using electricity, paints and spray cleaners puts pollution into the air every day. When the Bay Area experiences a heat wave, that pollution cooks up into smog. Motor vehicle exhaust, gasoline vapors, industrial emissions and household chemicals contain volatile organic compounds and nitrogen oxides which combine with heat and sunlight to form ground-level ozone. Breathing smog can cause throat irritation, congestion and chest pain. It can trigger asthma, inflame the lining of the lungs and worsen bronchitis and emphysema.

Long-term exposure to smog can reduce lung function. High levels of smog are particularly harmful for young children, seniors and those with respiratory and heart conditions. Vigorous outdoor exercise should be undertaken only in the early morning hours when ozone concentrations are lower. The Air District issues *Spare the Air* Alerts whenever air quality is forecast to reach unhealthy concentrations.

A list of simple things the public can do to make clean air choices every day:

- Take public transit or carpool - don't be a single occupancy vehicle
- Bike to work or around town
- Avoid using gas-powered lawn mowers and leaf blowers
- Work at home or telecommute
- Reduce household energy use
- Cook indoors, not on the barbecue
- Avoid using aerosol spay cleaners, paints and hairspray

The Bay Area Air Quality Management District (www.baaqmd.gov) is the regional agency chartered with protecting air quality in the Bay Area. For more information about Spare the Air, visit www.sparetheair.org.