



Spare the Air Alert

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
September 19, 2009

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Air District issues *Spare the Air* Alert for Sunday, September 20

Residents urged to carpool and take transit

SAN FRANCISCO - The Bay Area Air Quality Management District is issuing the 11th *Spare the Air* advisory for the 2009 summer ozone season.

Air quality in the Bay Area is forecast to be unhealthy tomorrow, Sunday, September 20, 2009. There is no free transit tomorrow and there is no wood-burning ban in place.

"Air quality is expected to be unhealthy tomorrow," said Jack Broadbent, executive officer of the Air District. "Please remember to carpool or take transit - your actions can help us all breathe easier."

The Air District issues summertime *Spare the Air* Alerts whenever ozone pollution is forecast to reach unhealthy concentrations. Ozone 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 can reduce lung function.

High levels of ozone pollution are particularly harmful for young children, seniors and those with respiratory and heart conditions. When a *Spare the Air* Alert is issued, vigorous outdoor exercise should be undertaken only in the early morning hours when ozone concentrations are lower.

Ground-level ozone is formed when volatile organic compounds and nitrogen oxides from motor vehicle exhaust, gasoline vapors, industrial emissions and household chemicals combine with oxygen in the presence of heat and sunlight.

As part of this *Spare the Air* season's effort to educate the public about ridesharing, Bay Area commuters are encouraged to share fun and interesting carpool experiences through the Air District's "Confessions of a Carpooler" contest. The contest will run through September 30, 2009.

The Air District encourages commuters to carpool tomorrow and share their best stories and tips by uploading a three-minute video to the contest page on www.SpareTheAir.org. Winning stories will be posted to the Air District's YouTube channel. Visit www.SpareTheAir.org for full details and rules, including information about the prizes from local companies such as Dreyer's Grand Ice Cream, Inc., Solio and Autonet Mobile.

A list of simple things the public can do to *Spare the Air* every day:

- Carpool – any ride is worth sharing!
- Take public transit
- Work at home or telecommute
- Bike to work or around town



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- Link errands to reduce driving

Email AirAlerts are available through the EnviroFlash system at <http://baaqmdsparetheair.enviroflash.info/>. EnviroFlash AirAlerts provide notification when the Bay Area experiences a Spare the Air Day and the option of receiving daily air pollution forecasts.

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.

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