



# NEWS

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## **Spare the Air season begins today** *Air District celebrates 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Spare the Air*

**SAN FRANCISCO** – Today the Bay Area Air District is announcing the start of the *Spare the Air* smog season and marking the 20 year anniversary of the *Spare the Air* program.

Spare the Air began in 1991. Through the *Spare the Air* program, Bay Area residents are encouraged to reduce air pollution every day by reducing driving, keeping their vehicles maintained, carpooling, taking transit, and walking and biking.

“For the last 20 years, the Spare the Air campaign has encouraged Bay Area residents to reduce their driving which contributes to more than half of our region’s air pollution,” said Jack Broadbent, executive officer of the Air District. “Residents can do their part to reduce air pollution by making a commitment to not drive one day per week.”

To mark the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the *Spare the Air* program, the Air District’s Facebook and Twitter sites will feature *Spare the Air* facts and trivia throughout the summer season that will show the air quality progress in the region since the program’s inception and offer tips for reducing emissions.

*Spare the Air* health alerts are issued when ozone pollution is forecast to reach unhealthy levels. Ozone, or smog, can cause throat irritation, congestion, chest pain, trigger asthma, inflame the lining of the lungs and worsen bronchitis and emphysema. Ozone pollution is particularly harmful for young children, seniors and those with respiratory and heart conditions.

Tailpipe exhaust from the millions of cars on Bay Area roads has been the largest source of smog in the Bay Area. Smog 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.

Residents can help *Spare the Air* by carpooling, taking transit, biking or walking instead of driving alone. Visit [www.sparetheair.org](http://www.sparetheair.org), call 1-800-HELPAIR (435-7247) or sign up for email AirAlerts at [www.sparetheair.org](http://www.sparetheair.org) to check the daily air quality forecast.

The Bay Area Air Quality Management District ([www.baaqmd.gov](http://www.baaqmd.gov)) is the regional agency responsible for protecting air quality in the Bay Area. For more information about *Spare the Air*, visit [www.sparetheair.org](http://www.sparetheair.org).

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