



# NEWS

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**May 1, 2013**

**CONTACT: Lisa Fasano**  
**415.749.4900**

## ***Spare the Air* summer season begins May 1st** ***Bay Area commuters encouraged to find a better way to work this summer***

**SAN FRANCISCO** – The Bay Area Air Quality Management District is launching the 2013 summer *Spare the Air* season on May 1.

This summer, the Air District is encouraging Bay Area residents to find a better way to work and enjoy the many perks experienced by commuters who take transit, carpool, bike or walk to work, instead of driving alone.

“Transportation related air pollution continues to be our biggest air pollution challenge,” said Jack Broadbent, executive officer of the Air District. “Rethinking our daily commute, choosing clean vehicles, and exploring options to driving alone will help our region stay competitive and improve air quality.”

During the summer months, pollution from cars and trucks can “cook up” in high temperatures and lead to unhealthy air quality. When air quality is forecast to be unhealthy, the Air District will issue a *Spare the Air Alert* in order to warn the public about the health impacts of poor air quality and to reemphasize the need for all residents to drive less, every day. Poor air quality is especially harmful for children, the elderly and those with heart or respiratory conditions. When a *Spare the Air Alert* is issued, outdoor exercise should be done only in the early morning hours when ozone concentrations are lower.

The single most effective way for residents to reduce smog is to drive less. According to recent census data, more than 37 percent of Bay Area employees commute alone to work each day, spending an average of 58 minutes on the road. Air District survey results also find that Bay Area employees are more likely to adopt alternatives to driving alone when encouraged to do so by their employer.

This summer, the Air District will launch a new outreach campaign to encourage employers and their employees to look for ways to share, shorten or change their commutes so that they spend less time driving alone. The outreach campaign will utilize statement URLs, such as [www.discoverabetterwaytowork.com](http://www.discoverabetterwaytowork.com), and [www.yourcommuteisnowyourgym.com](http://www.yourcommuteisnowyourgym.com), to depict the quality of life benefits of sharing or simply changing the drive-alone commute. All URLs point to [www.stacommuteitips.org](http://www.stacommuteitips.org) which provides aggregated commute information and tips by county.

To find out when a *Spare the Air Alert* is in effect, register for email AirAlerts at [sparetheair.org](http://sparetheair.org), call 1(800) HELP-AIR, download the *Spare the Air App* or connect with *Spare the Air* on Facebook or Twitter.

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

###