



NEWS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Air District issues Spare the Air Smog Alert for TODAY

Air quality expected to reach unhealthy levels this afternoon

SAN FRANCISCO – To protect public health, the Bay Area Air Quality Management District is issuing its 22nd Spare the Air Alert for smog in 2016 for today. **For the first time, the Air District is calling a same-day alert for ozone due to sea breezes that didn't materialize as expected, resulting in unhealthy air pollution levels in the Bay Area. Spare the Air Alerts are normally called the day before unhealthy air quality is expected.**

Air quality is forecast to be unhealthy this afternoon, Monday, September 19. High pressure in the region is stronger than anticipated and temperatures will remain hot today with continued light winds.

"Weather can change quickly and forecasts this morning indicate the region will experience poor air quality this afternoon," said Jack Broadbent, executive officer of the Air District. "As a result, we are alerting the public to protect their health today by avoiding strenuous exercise this afternoon when smog levels will be highest."

Spare the Air Alerts are issued when ozone pollution is forecast to reach unhealthy levels. Ozone, or smog, can cause throat irritation, congestion and chest pain. It can also trigger asthma, inflame the lining of the lungs and worsen bronchitis and emphysema. Long-term exposure to ozone can reduce lung function. Ozone pollution is particularly harmful for young children, seniors and those with respiratory and heart 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.

To improve air quality, residents are encouraged to carpool, bike, walk or take transit to work instead of driving alone, not just on *Spare the Air* days, but every day. The public is encouraged to consider an all-electric vehicle as their next vehicle purchase to help the region reduce the amount of gas powered vehicles that contribute to unhealthy smog. Residents can visit www.stacommuetetips.org to find a list of commute programs available where they live and work.

To find out when a *Spare the Air Alert* is in effect, residents can register for email AirAlerts at www.sparetheair.org, call 1(800) HELP-AIR, download the *Spare the Air* app or connect with *Spare the Air* on Facebook or Twitter.

There is no free transit today and there is no wood burning ban in place.

The Bay Area Air Quality Management District (www.baqmd.gov) is the regional agency responsible for protecting air quality in the nine-county Bay Area. For more information about Spare the Air, visit sparetheair.org.

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