



NEWS RELEASE

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Spare the Air smog season begins today

Commuters urged to find alternatives to driving alone

SAN FRANCISCO - The Bay Area Air Quality Management District is announcing the start of the Spare the Air summer smog season today, Monday, May 2.

Millions of cars on our roadways each day remain the largest source of summertime smog pollution and greenhouse gas emissions in the Bay Area. The Spare the Air campaign encourages Bay Area residents to drive less and look for ways to share, shorten or change their commutes to help reduce smog, traffic and gridlock in the region.

“As more Bay Area residents return to the office and our roads become increasingly congested, it’s more important than ever that we find alternatives to driving alone,” said Damian Breen, senior deputy executive officer of operations/enforcement at the Air District. “When we choose to take transit, work remotely, or walk or bike instead of driving alone, we help protect our air quality, health and quality of life.”

Today is also the start of national Air Quality Awareness Week, which promotes awareness of air quality issues and encourages everyone to learn about the Air Quality Index and how to track daily air quality. Bay Area residents can check hourly air quality readings at <http://baaqmd.gov/highs>.

During the warmer weather months, Spare the Air Alerts are issued when smog, or ozone pollution, is forecast to reach unhealthy levels. Ozone can cause throat irritation, congestion and chest pain. It can 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. When a Spare the Air Alert is called, limit outdoor exercise in the late afternoon when ozone concentrations are highest.

Know when a Spare the Air Alert is in effect:

- Via text alerts by texting the word “START” to 817-57
- By connecting with Spare the Air on Facebook or Twitter
- On the sparetheair.org website
- By calling 1(800) HELP-AIR
- By signing up for email AirAlerts at sparetheair.org
- By downloading the Spare the Air iPhone or Android App

The [Bay Area Air Quality Management District](#) is the regional agency responsible for protecting air quality in the nine-county Bay Area. Connect with the Air District via [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) and [YouTube](#).

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