

NEWS RELEASE

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Spare the Air smog season begins May 1 *Commuters encouraged 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, Wednesday, May 1.

The largest source of smog pollution and greenhouse gas emissions in the Bay Area are the millions of cars on our roadways every day. 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 seasonally warmer temperatures begin, the risk of calling Spare the Air Alerts for unhealthy air quality becomes greater.

“Fewer cars on the road leads to cleaner air and helps to maintain a better quality of life for all Bay Area residents,” said Dr. Philip Fine, executive officer of the Air District. “Finding alternatives to driving alone like taking transit, walking or biking, is an effective way we can all do our part to reduce unhealthy smog this summer.”

The launch of the Spare the Air smog season begins the week before **Air Quality Awareness Week**, a nationwide campaign to increase air quality awareness and inspire people to take steps to reduce their contribution to air pollution. This year’s campaign provides an opportunity for people to learn about what causes poor air quality and how they can prepare for and respond to it year-round.

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 temperatures and ozone concentrations are highest.

To find out when a Spare the Air Alert is in effect, residents can register for email or text notifications at www.sparetheair.org/alerts, call 1(800) HELP-AIR, download the Spare the Air Bay Area app or connect with Spare the Air on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) or [X](#).

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 [X](#), [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [YouTube](#). For more information about Spare the Air, visit www.sparetheair.org.

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