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## **Spare the Air smog season begins today**

*Residents encouraged to choose cleaner transportation options to reduce air pollution*

**SAN FRANCISCO** – The Bay Area Air District is announcing the start of the Spare the Air smog season, beginning Monday, May 4, and continuing through October.

The millions of cars on Bay Area roadways each day remain a major source of smog pollution and greenhouse gas emissions. The Spare the Air campaign encourages residents to drive less and look for ways to share, shorten or change their commutes to help reduce smog, traffic and congestion across the region. As temperatures rise heading into summer, the likelihood of Spare the Air Alerts for unhealthy air quality increases.

“Reducing air pollution comes down to everyday decisions,” said Dr. Philip Fine, executive officer of the Air District. “The Spare the Air campaign encourages using transit, biking or walking as behaviors that reduce smog and fine particle pollution. When people start making these choices, our region can accelerate our progress toward cleaner air.”

The start of the smog season aligns with preparations for Air Quality Awareness Week from May 4-8, a nationwide campaign that highlights the importance of clean air and encourages people to learn about the causes and impacts of air pollution. The campaign also provides practical steps residents can take to protect their health and reduce emissions 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, trigger asthma, inflame the lungs, and worsen bronchitis and emphysema. It is especially harmful for children, older adults and people with respiratory or heart conditions. When a Spare the Air Alert is in effect, residents are advised to limit outdoor exercise in the late afternoon when ozone levels are typically highest.

To find out when a Spare the Air Alert is in effect, residents can register for email or text notifications at [sparetheair.org/alerts](http://sparetheair.org/alerts), call 1-800-HELP-AIR, download the Spare the Air Bay Area app, or follow Spare the Air on social media.

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

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