



Maricopa County Air Quality Department

NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Ozone Campaign Begins April 1

PHOENIX (April 1, 2016) – Maricopa County Air Quality Department (MCAQD) announced the start of its official ozone campaign Friday, encouraging county residents to help reduce the harmful pollutant during the sunny spring and summer months.

The Ozone Campaign begins April 1 and continues through the end of September. Although the season kicks off on April Fool’s Day, ozone pollution is no joke.

Ground-level ozone forms when emissions from vehicles, gasoline and diesel equipment, industrial and chemical processes, and other everyday activities, react to sunlight. Naturally, ozone pollution is more prevalent during the spring and summer months because these emissions – volatile organic compounds (VOCs, solvents and fuels) and nitrogen oxides (NOx) react more readily in higher temperatures.

Ground-level ozone pollution is a direct threat to your lungs and can trigger asthma. Children are at the greatest risk from ozone because their lungs are still developing, they are most likely to be active outdoors, and they are more likely than adults to have asthma. Adults with asthma or other lung diseases, and older adults are also sensitive to ozone.

Although there are higher-risk groups, all county residents can be affected by ground-level ozone. For this reason, MCAQD is urging residents to, Commit to One Day and Help Keep Ozone Away.

“Because ozone is odorless and colorless, residents may not be aware of its harmful health impacts. The health threat from ozone should motivate each of us to take action,” MCAQD Director Philip McNeely said. “By making simple changes at least one day a week to our daily activities, such as reducing our driving, taking light rail or the bus, refueling after dark or riding a bike to work, we can have a great impact on reducing ozone concentrations and help keep our air clean.”

To learn more about the MCAQD’s Commit to One Day program or to sign-up to receive air quality updates by email or text message visit www.CleanAirMakeMore.com.

OZONE BACKGROUND: When exposed to sunlight, VOCs and NOx react to form ground-level ozone. Ground-level ozone is more prevalent April through September.

Ozone pollution prevention tips:

- Drive less. When possible, carpool, van pool or use public transportation.
- Avoid waiting in long drive-thru lines. Park your car and go inside.
- Ride your bike or walk to work.
- Refuel your vehicle after dark or during cooler evening hours.
- Use low VOC or water-based paints, stains, finishes and paint strippers.
- Delay painting projects until high-pollution advisories or health watches have passed.

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About Maricopa County Air Quality Department

The Maricopa County Air Quality Department is a regulatory agency whose goal is to ensure federal clean air standards are achieved and maintained for the residents and visitors of Maricopa County. The department is governed by the Maricopa County Board of Supervisors and follows air quality standards set forth by the federal Clean Air Act.

The department offers air quality information and resources on its Clean Air Make More website. Visit www.CleanAirMakeMore.com to learn more.

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