



NEWS

For Immediate Release

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Contact:

Scott Wegenast

Dee Lynch

502-574- 6712/ 718-3541

502-574-7275/ 797-0726

Air Quality Alert Issued Today for Kentuckiana Alert Now Includes Ozone Pollution

Louisville (June 23, 2005) – Louisville Metro Air Pollution Control District is issuing an Air Quality Alert for Fine Particulate Matter (PM_{2.5}) pollution and Ozone on **Thursday, June 23, 2005**.

The air quality forecast for tomorrow June 23, 2005 is for:

- *Fine Particulate Matter (PM_{2.5}) is forecasted to be in the Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups with an AQI level of 120.*
- *Ground level-ozone is forecasted to be in the Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups with an AQI of level of 119.*

Who is affected?

Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups is defined as active children and adults as well as people with serious health conditions, such as asthma. Prolonged outdoor activity and physical exertion should be limited.

What is the Air Quality Index?

The Air Quality Index, called the AQI, is a national standard used to report daily air quality. The AQI translates each pollutant measured into a common index. An index score of 100 equals the federal standard's limit.



An Air Quality Alert is issued when particle pollution levels are expected to reach Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups range, which is an AQI of 101 or higher. Sensitive Groups include, the elderly, children, persons with asthma or other breathing problems, and persons with heart disease. These groups are advised to limit their outdoor activities to reduce their exposure to particle pollution.

What is Particulate Matter pollution?

Particulate matter, or PM, is the term for particles found in the air, including dust, dirt, soot, smoke, and liquid droplets. Particles of special concern to the protection of lung health are those known as fine particles, less than 2.5 microns in diameter. (For comparison, a human hair is about 75 microns in diameter.) Fine particles are easily inhaled deeply into the lungs where they can be absorbed into the bloodstream or remain embedded for long periods of time.

What is Ozone Pollution?

Ozone is a colorless, odorless gas and is the primary ingredient of smog. It is a form of oxygen with three oxygen atoms in every molecule (O₃) instead of the two in the normal oxygen (O₂) we need to live. Ozone levels generally peak during late afternoon and early evening hours.

Ground-level ozone and particulate matter share peak months, May through August, as well as similar pollution sources – vehicles and industry. Again, as with ground-level ozone, the populations most vulnerable to particulate pollution include children, the elderly, and individuals with existing cardiovascular or lung diseases such as asthma and emphysema. Both fine particulates (PM) and ozone remain in the air for days and can travel hundreds of miles from their origins, spreading over large geographic regions.

Reduce your exposure to particle pollution and ozone by doing the following:

Limit prolonged outdoor activity and physical exertion. Plan strenuous activities when particle levels are lower. Reduce the amount of time spent at vigorous activity, or choose a less strenuous activity, such as walking instead of jogging.

When particulate matter is high outdoors, it may also be high indoors. Certain filters are available to help reduce particles indoors. You can reduce indoor particles by eliminating tobacco smoke, and reducing your use of candles, wood-burning stoves or charcoal grills.

APCD recommends the following actions to help protect public health and help improve Louisville's air on an Air Quality Alert day:

- Drive less and combine errands in one car-trip, when possible. A car pollutes five times more when it's started after sitting for an hour than when the engine's warm.
- Ride the bus--call TARC at 585-1234 for route information. Carpool and vanpool with your neighbors or co-workers. Call Ticket to Ride at 267-5400 for ride-sharing information.
- Use ceiling fans or portable fans to help your AC work easier and consume less electricity.
- Stop at the "click" and avoid topping off fuel tanks. Re-fuel when it's cool. Tighten your gas cap securely to prevent harmful fumes from escaping into the air.
- Maintain optimal tire inflation and drive the speed limit for better fuel economy.
- Leave the car in park at lunchtime and brown-bag your lunch, or order in together as a group.
- Avoid using gas-powered lawn equipment. Mowing your yard for an hour creates the same amount of smog-forming hydrocarbons as driving from Louisville to Nashville in a newer car.
- It All Adds Up to Cleaner Air.

**Additional information for the public is available by calling the District's
Air Quality Hotline at 574-3319, or online at www.apcd.org**

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