

# NEWS

**For Immediate Release**

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**Contact:**

T.J. Jessie

502-574-7209/ 718-3273

## **Poor Air Quality Forecasted for Friday, August 12 Air Quality Alert Issued for Fine Particles**

**Louisville (August 11, 2005)** - Louisville Metro Air Pollution Control District has issued an Air Quality Alert for **Friday, August 12, 2005**. The determining pollutant is fine particles.

- *Fine Particulate Matter (PM<sub>2.5</sub>) is forecasted to be in the Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups range with an AQI of 108 on Friday.*
- *Readings for Particulate Matter (PM<sub>2.5</sub>) have reached the Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups range today with an Air Quality Index of 121. Levels are expected to remain high throughout the day until late tonight.*

### **Who is affected?**

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 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 ground-level 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.

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 pollution 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.

**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.
- Limit idling to no more than two minutes. A car pollutes five times more when it's started after sitting for an hour than when the engine's warm.
- Stop at the "click" and avoid topping off fuel tanks.
- Re-fuel when it's cool and 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.
- 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.
- Avoid using gas or diesel 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](http://www.apcd.org)  
<<http://www.apcd.org>>**

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