



Spare the Air ADVISORY

Wednesday, June 21, 2006
For Immediate Release

Contact: Luna Salaver
(415) 749-4900
(415) 760-0283 (cell)

First *Spare the Air* Day of 2006

Free Rides on 25 Bay Area Transit Agencies Offered All Day Tomorrow

High pressure, escalating temperatures, and low winds are bringing the first Spare the Air advisory of the 2006 "smog season," which began June 1 and runs through October 13 this year. **Unhealthy air quality is forecast for tomorrow, Thursday, June 22, 2006 in the Bay Area**, so passengers on 25 Bay Area transit systems, including Muni, BART, AC Transit, VTA, Golden Gate Transit, ACE, SamTrans, Caltrain and ferries, can take advantage of the **free rides all day during regular hours of operation**.

This year, 25 transit agencies have joined together to offer free commutes all day on the first three non-holiday weekday *Spare the Air* days. The \$7.5 million dollars that makes this unique transit partnership possible is available from the federal Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement (CMAQ) program and Transportation Fund for Clean Air (TFCA)/Air District funding.

"This is the largest free transit for air quality program in the nation," stated Air District Executive Director Jack Broadbent. "Using transit tomorrow could actually *prevent* unhealthy air—and that means helping people breathe better. People with asthma, heart and respiratory problems, the very young and the elderly are especially impacted by poor air quality," Broadbent added.

Hot and stagnant weather this week is expected to contribute to the production of ground-level ozone, the main ingredient in smog. Ground level ozone is formed when volatile organic compounds (VOCs) combine with oxides of nitrogen (NOX) in the presence of heat and sunlight. These smog-forming gases are emitted from tailpipes, evaporating gasoline, paints and household products.

Precautions

- **Vigorous outdoor exercise should be limited to the early morning hours or around sunset when ozone levels decrease.**

What to do

- **Carpool or take transit. Call 511 or check www.511.org for transit information**
- Refuel after 6 p.m. or wait until the following evening to pump gas.
- Limit driving as much as possible by combining errands into one trip.
- Put off yard work with gasoline-powered lawn and garden equipment.
- Postpone any painting projects for a cleaner day.
- Reduce the use of consumer products like hair sprays, paints, and household cleaners, which emit smog-forming chemicals.

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Participating Transit Agencies Include:

- Muni
- ACE
- AC Transit
- Alameda-Oakland Ferry
- Alameda-Harbor Bay Ferry
- BART
- Benicia Breeze
- Caltrain
- Cloverdale Transit
- County Connection
- Dumbarton Express
- Fairfield/Suisun Transit
- Golden Gate Transit and Ferries
- Livermore-Amador Valley Transit Authority (WHEELS)
- Petaluma Transit
- Rio Vista Breeze
- SamTrans
- Santa Rosa CityBus
- Sonoma County Transit
- Tri Delta Transit
- Union City Transit
- Vacaville City Coach
- Napa VINE
- VTA
- WestCat

For background and air quality information visit the website: www.sparetheair.org

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