



Spare the Air Alert

For Immediate Release
May 15, 2009

Contact: Kristine Roselius
415.749.4900 (office)
415.519.5419 (cell)

Air District issues *Spare the Air* alert for smog

SAN FRANCISCO - Today the Bay Area Air Quality Management District issued the third *Spare the Air* advisory for smog in 2009.

Air quality in the Bay Area is forecast to be unhealthy tomorrow, Saturday, May 16. There is no free transit tomorrow and there is no wood burning ban in place. The Air District encourages residents to drive less and reduce their energy use.

"This Spare the Air alert reminds us that we need to reduce pollution in the Bay Area by driving less, carpooling more and taking transit," said Lisa Fasano, communications director for the Air District. "We need to reduce the overall levels of pollution if we want to maintain clean air this summer."

Motor vehicle exhaust, gasoline vapors, industrial emissions and household chemicals contain volatile organic compounds and nitrogen oxides that combine with oxygen in the presence of heat and sunlight to form ground-level ozone. Breathing ozone can cause throat irritation, congestion and chest pain. It can trigger asthma, inflame the lining of the lungs and worsen bronchitis and emphysema.

Long-term exposure to ozone can reduce lung function. High levels of ozone pollution are particularly harmful for young children, seniors and those with respiratory and heart conditions. Vigorous outdoor exercise should be undertaken only in the early morning hours when ozone concentrations are lower. The Air District issues *Spare the Air* Alerts whenever air quality is forecast to reach unhealthy concentrations.

A list of simple things the public can do to make clean air choices every day:

- Bike to work or around town
- Take public transit
- Work at home or telecommute
- Carpool and link your errands to reduce driving
- Avoid using gas-powered lawn mowers and leaf blowers
- Reduce household energy use
- Cook indoors, not on the barbecue
- Avoid using aerosol spray cleaners, paints and hairspray

The Bay Area Air Quality Management District (www.baaqmd.gov) is the regional agency chartered with protecting air quality in the Bay Area. For more information about Spare the Air, visit www.sparetheair.org.

###