



NEWS RELEASE

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Spare the Air smog season begins today as warmer weather nears *Commuters encouraged to reduce driving, find alternatives to driving alone*

SAN FRANCISCO - The Bay Area Air Quality Management District is announcing the launch of the 2019 Spare the Air summer smog season today, Wednesday, May 1.

The millions of cars on our roadways each day remain the largest source of smog pollution and greenhouse gas emissions in the Bay Area. The Spare the Air campaign encourages Bay Area residents to drive less and look for ways to share, shorten or change their commutes to help reduce smog, traffic and gridlock in the region.

“Last year, the Bay Area experienced some of the worst air quality ever recorded,” said Jack Broadbent, executive officer of the Air District. “With climate change driving more extreme weather triggering smog and supercharging wildfires, it is more important than ever that we reduce air pollution and greenhouse gases by carpooling, taking public transit, walking and biking instead of driving alone.”

Bay Area employees are encouraged to check with their human resources office to learn what commuter benefits are available to them through their employer. The Bay Area Commuter Benefits program requires all employers in the Air District’s jurisdiction with 50 or more full-time employees to offer commuter benefits to their workers.

During the warmer weather months, Spare the Air Alerts are issued when smog, or ozone pollution, is forecast to reach unhealthy levels. Ozone can cause throat irritation, congestion and chest pain. It can trigger asthma, inflame the lining of the lungs and worsen bronchitis and emphysema. Ozone pollution is particularly harmful for young children, seniors and those with respiratory and heart conditions. When a Spare the Air Alert is called, limit outdoor exercise in the late afternoon when ozone concentrations are highest.

Know when a Spare the Air Alert is in effect:

- Via text alerts by texting the word “START” to 817-57
- By connecting with Spare the Air on Facebook or Twitter
- On the www.sparetheair.org website
- By calling 1(800) HELP-AIR
- By signing up for AirAlerts at www.sparetheair.org
- By downloading the Spare the Air iPhone or Android App

The [Bay Area Air Quality Management District](#) is the regional agency responsible for protecting air quality in the nine-county Bay Area. Connect with the Air District via [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), and [YouTube](#). For more information about Spare the Air, visit <http://www.sparetheair.org>.

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