

I Can Make An Impact

We are all stewards of our air and have an obligation to protect it. While your small action may not seem to make a difference, small actions taken by many people make a **LASTING IMPACT!**

- Don't idle. Turn off your vehicle while waiting in lines, or go inside.
- Conserve energy. Turn off the lights when you leave the room.
- Reduce, Reuse and **RECYCLE!**
- Maintain your vehicle to ensure it is working properly.
- Fuel up in the evening hours after the heat of the day and don't top off to prevent spillage.
- Encourage your local school to join the B2 (Breathe Better) Program.
- Plant a tree and enjoy the shade.
- Shop locally and reduce transportation costs.
- Check daily air quality forecasts by visiting www.airnow.gov



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Breathe Clean Anderson

Air Quality Awareness Campaign



Everyone deserves to breathe clean air...



Clean Air Act

In 1970, Congress passed the Clean Air Act (CAA). The CAA is a comprehensive federal law enabling the regulation of air emissions from stationary and mobile sources, through the establishment of National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS). The CAA was last updated in 1990.

The overwhelming goal of the Act is to protect the public health and welfare from the hazards of air pollutants.

While the CAA is a federal law covering the whole of the US, state and local governments are responsible for a lot of the work to meet and maintain the Act's requirements. This allows local jurisdictions to develop unique solutions for pollution problems affecting us at home.

SC Department of Health and Environmental Control (SCDHEC) is responsible for the State Implementation Plan (SIP) - a collection of regulations, programs, and policies to clean and maintain air quality in SC..

Pollutants

Of the six common air pollutants monitored, we are primarily concerned with ground-level ozone and particle pollution.

Ground-level Ozone

Ground-level ozone is formed when nitrogen oxides and volatile organic compounds react in the presence of heat and sunlight.

Nitrogen Oxides (NOx) come primarily from combustion of fuels in automobiles, coal-fired power plants, industrial boilers and gas-powered engines such as lawnmowers and leaf blowers.

Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs) are vapors emitted by paint and print shops, gas stations, dry cleaners, lawn chemicals and from combustion engines, such as those in cars and trucks, boats and diesel locomotives. Trees also emit VOCs, especially pine trees.

NOx and VOCs combine to form ground-level ozone on hot sunny days, which is why most exceedances are seen in the summer. Ozone exceedances are most likely to occur between May 1 and September 30.

While ground-level ozone is a health and environmental problem, ozone in the stratosphere (six to 30 miles above the earth) is beneficial. It shields the Earth from the sun's harmful ultraviolet radiation.

Particle Pollution

Particle pollution, or particulate matter (PM2.5), comes from some of the same sources as NOx and VOCs, including power plants and factories, motor vehicles (especially older diesel vehicles) and others. Particle pollution is also created by wood burning, construction activity and agriculture. Unlike ground-level ozone, particle pollution occurs year-round.

Why Should I Care?

Air quality, whether good or bad, impacts your health and the health of all other living things in the environment and also our economy.

Health

Ground-level ozone is harmful to health, especially for children, the elderly, outdoor workers and those with respiratory conditions such as asthma. Particle pollution affects these people, as well as, those with heart disease. The primary target is the respiratory system, but it also targets the heart and the immune system. Ozone is a reactive and irritating chemical. When inhaled, it can irritate and inflame the airways that carry air from the mouth and nose to the lungs.

You should become aware of your personal sensitivity to air pollution, and pay attention to local air quality forecasts, (www.airnow.gov or www.enviroflash.info). The highest ozone levels usually occur from 2 to 7 p.m., primarily in the hot summer months from May to September.

Unhealthy levels of particle pollution can peak at any time throughout the year and at any time of the day. Particle pollution can also be just as high indoors as it is outdoors, so be sure to check out tips on how to improve your indoor air quality, as well.

Economy

If our area is deemed out of attainment of NAAQS, stricter requirements for businesses and infrastructure development would likely stifle economic and job growth. It could restrict the use of federal transportation funding and incur additional regulations on residents (such as annual tail pipe emissions inspections).

By taking proactive measures, both individually and collectively, we can protect our air quality and prevent it from falling into non-attainment.