



DATE: May 30, 2008

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ADEQ Issues Ozone High Pollution Advisories For Saturday, May 31 and Sunday, June 1

PHOENIX (May 30, 2008) -- The Arizona Department of Environmental Quality has issued High Pollution Advisories (HPAs) for the Phoenix metropolitan area for Saturday, May 31 and Sunday, June 1. Forecast weather conditions are expected to generate levels of ozone that may exceed the federal health standard.

These will be the fourth and fifth HPAs issued for ozone this year.

ADEQ recommends that children and adults with respiratory problems avoid outdoor activities during the weekend and suggests that the general public limit outdoor activity.

Valley residents should reduce ozone-producing emissions by taking the following steps:

- Drive as little as possible: car pool, use mass transit or telecommute. For information on transportation alternatives, visit Valley Metro: www.valleymetro.org
- Avoid using gas-powered lawn and garden equipment.
- Refuel vehicles after 4 p.m.
- Avoid idling your vehicle.
- Make sure your car's tires are properly inflated and your wheels are aligned.
- Be careful not to spill gasoline when filling up your car or gasoline-powered lawn and garden equipment.
- Seal containers of household cleaners, workshop chemicals and solvents and garden chemicals to prevent gases from evaporating into the air.
- Dispose of containers properly.

"We may be heading into a tough ozone season this summer. Increasing temperatures and other conditions are contributing to higher ozone levels," ADEQ Director Steve Owens. "This weekend is just the beginning of June, and already we have had a number of HPAs for high ozone levels this season. We urge Valley residents to take steps to help reduce emissions that lead to the formation of ozone."

Ground-level ozone pollution is caused by the interaction of sunlight with the many pollutants generated by automobiles, gasoline-powered lawn equipment and other sources. Ozone can irritate the respiratory system, reduce lung function, aggravate asthma and other chronic lung conditions and inflame and damage the cells that line the lungs. Repeated short-term ozone damage to children's developing lungs may lead to reduced lung function in adulthood.

Daily air quality forecasts are available on ADEQ's Web site or by telephone at (602) 771-2367. To get the air quality forecast via email, subscribe to our daily forecast list: www.azdeq.gov/subscribe.html

You can also sign up for HPA text-message alerts: www.azdeq.gov/sms.html