



**Maricopa County**  
Air Quality Department



## **HIGH POLLUTION ADVISORY**

### **NO BURN DAY SATURDAY AND SUNDAY**

MARICOPA COUNTY (December 23, 2011) – Yule logs will need to remain dark this Christmas holiday weekend. No Burn Day restrictions will be in effect Saturday and Sunday due to deteriorating air quality conditions.

The Arizona Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ) is issuing a High Pollution Advisory (HPA) for December 24 and December 25, 2011 for fine particulates often referred to as PM-2.5. As a result, the Maricopa County Air Quality Department will issue No Burn Day restrictions Saturday and Sunday. Restrictions include a ban on woodburning activity including fireplaces, fire pits and open outdoor burning.

Upcoming weather changes and historical air quality data prompted today's HPA issuance.

“ADEQ uses knowledge of upcoming weather conditions along with historic trends to predict possible air pollution concerns in the near future,” explained ADEQ Air Quality Division Director Eric Massey. “A high pressure system is expected to slowly transition into the area this weekend. History has shown that during this time of year we can expect air pollution to quickly accumulate under these conditions, leading us to issue a High Pollution Advisory for Saturday and Sunday.”

The HPA will automatically trigger Maricopa County's No Burn Day restrictions.

“Pollution from woodburning is something within our control. We can choose to keep the fireplace dark to help our air quality improve,” states Maricopa County Air Quality Department Director Bill Wiley. “What better gift to give this year than the gift of clean air?”

The HPA also includes the following restrictions:

- Contractors cannot use leaf blowers on governmental properties on HPA days.
- Hotels, restaurants and residents must refrain from burning wood in their indoor fireplaces and outdoor fire pits during a HPA. Open burning is also restricted.
- Off-highway vehicles are prohibited from being used during a PM-10 HPA.

ADEQ recommends that children and adults with respiratory problems avoid outdoor activities on Saturday and Sunday, and suggests the general public limit outdoor activity throughout the day.

Valley Metro requests employers activate their HPA Plan. Residents and employers are asked to use these tips to help make the air healthier to breathe:

- Eliminate wood burning in fireplaces, stoves, chimineas and outdoor fire pits.
- Drive as little as possible: car pool, use public transit or telecommute. For information on transportation alternatives, visit Valley Metro: [www.valleymetro.org](http://www.valleymetro.org).
- Avoid using leaf blowers.
- Avoid activities that generate dust, such as driving on dirt roads.
- To learn more about the air you're breathing, visit: [www.CleanAirMakeMore.com](http://www.CleanAirMakeMore.com)

**PARTICULATE MATTER BACKGROUND:** State and county agencies measure PM-10 and PM-2.5 which are extremely small solid particles and liquid droplets found circulating in the air. PM, or particulate matter, comes from either combustion (cars, industry, woodburning) or dust stirred up into the air. High levels of PM are typically created when the air is especially stagnant or especially windy.

PM-10 stands for particulate matter measuring 10 microns or less. PM-2.5 stands for particulate matter measuring 2.5 microns or less. To put this in perspective, one strand of human hair is 70-100 microns in size.

### **WHO'S WHO?**

The **Arizona Department of Environmental Quality [ADEQ]** provides a daily forecast for air quality. When conditions exist, ADEQ will issue high pollution advisories or health watches. Please visit [www.azdeq.gov/environ/air/ozone/ensemble.pdf](http://www.azdeq.gov/environ/air/ozone/ensemble.pdf) or call (602) 771-2367. To receive the air quality forecast via email and/or text message please visit [www.azdeq.gov/subscribe.html](http://www.azdeq.gov/subscribe.html)  
**CONTACT:** Mark Shaffer – (602) 771-2215 desk / (480) 433-9551 cell

The **Maricopa County Air Quality Department** is a regulatory agency whose goal is to ensure federal clean air standards are achieved and maintained for the residents and visitors of Maricopa County. The department is governed by the Maricopa County Board of Supervisors and follows air quality standards set forth by the federal Clean Air Act. The department offers air quality information and resources on its Clean Air Make More website. Please visit [www.CleanAirMakeMore.com](http://www.CleanAirMakeMore.com) to learn more.

**CONTACT:** Holly Ward – (602) 506-6713 desk / (602) 526-7307 cell

**Valley Metro/RPTA** provides eco-friendly public transit options to residents of greater Phoenix and Maricopa County, including a clean-fuel bus fleet, low-emissions light rail, online carpool matching and bus trip mapping, and bicycle and telework assistance. Funding is provided by local, state and federal revenues; and administered by a board of 16 governments working to improve and regionalize the public transit system. Please visit [www.ValleyMetro.org](http://www.ValleyMetro.org) to learn more.

**CONTACT:** Susan Tierney – (602) 523-6004 desk / (602) 292-4093 cell

