

**R Observe HPA R Refuel after dark
R Carpool R Telework R Take Transit
R Stay in for lunch R Combine trips**



For Immediate Release...

Summer High Pollution Advisory Season Is Just Around The Corner

With warm weather approaching and ozone and particulate levels likely to reach unhealthy standards sometime during the summer months, your participation in the annual High Pollution Advisory Program is very important. While so much is happening in State government, we cannot ignore the health impacts and concerns of the HPA season.

The unhealthy ozone that is created from sunlight, heat, and volatile organic compounds (emissions) is dangerous to breathe—especially over long periods of time. Certain segments of our population are more at risk. Here are some of the health risks of ozone:

- Increased hospital admissions for respiratory ailments.
- Repeated exposure can make you more susceptible to respiratory infection and lung inflammation.
- Most at risk are children - they are active outdoors and breathe in larger quantities of ozone per pound of body weight.
- Even low levels of ozone can be dangerous to outdoor workers such as construction and landscape workers.

The Arizona Department of Environmental Quality will be issuing weekly air quality forecasts to help residents with planning outdoor activities in advance. Capitol Rideshare will be communicating the weekly Air Quality Forecasts (AQF) to all agencies for dissemination to their employees. The information will also be communicated on our website, agency website links, and emails from Agency Travel Reduction Coordinators. ADEQ will also issue special Health Watches for sensitive populations when the air quality is near levels that may affect children, seniors, or persons with existing respiratory problems. These Health Watches will be issued through the general media.

On High Pollution Advisory Days (HPAs), when we are likely to reach or exceed the federal standard, we need our State employees to use an alternate mode to get to work. Employees are urged to carpool, take transit, or telework. HPA signs will be posted at all agencies. During the ozone season (April 1 through September 30), if there is an HPA issued, State employees in Maricopa County will also be eligible to sign on to our website and enter the Summer Ozone Contest. They must use an alternate mode for each HPA day to be eligible. At the end of each month, recognition will be awarded to randomly selected recipients.

A sample article is included with this information.

If you have any questions about the High Pollution Advisory Program, please call Capitol Rideshare at 542-RIDE. With your help we can make a difference.

Program Components



Air Quality Forecast

Each Monday, agencies will receive the Air Quality Forecast (AQF) for the week via email from Capitol Rideshare to communicate to their employees.

HPA

On days when ozone levels are in danger of reaching or exceeding the new health standard, a High Pollution Advisory (HPA) will be issued. Any day that an HPA is issued, travel reduction coordinators will be immediately notified. They, in turn, will notify their agency employees.

HPA Educational Campaign

Information will be distributed in the March/April, May/June, and July/August editions of the Rideshare Review newsletter. Additional printed and electronic material will also be distributed.

HPA Online Contest

During the ozone season (April 1 through September 30), if there is an HPA issued, State employees in Maricopa County will be encouraged to sign on to Capitol Rideshare's website and enter the Summer HPA Contest. Employees are eligible to enter the contest each HPA day they use an alternative mode to replace the single occupant vehicle commute trip to work. At the end of each month, randomly selected recipients will be recognized.

Animated Monthly Emails

Animated monthly emails will be distributed to agency Travel Reduction Coordinators and they, in turn, will send them to all employees in Maricopa County. The message will contain information regarding education and understanding of the HPA program, alternate modes, and ozone pollution.

Summer Clean Air Challenge

The Clean Air Campaign will feature two Challenge Weeks. The first Challenge Week will be June 20 - 24 and the second Challenge Week will be July 11-15.

HPA Awareness Information Tables

Whenever possible, awareness tables will be conducted at various agencies during the lunch hour. Information about the HPA Program, ozone pollution, and alternate modes will be distributed.

Social Marketing Promotion

Through the Capitol Rideshare Facebook page, we will conduct an ongoing information and education campaign about the HPA program and pollution information.

General Collateral Materials

A small information kit will be distributed to each agency newsletter editor and to each Travel Reduction Coordinator. The electronic kit will contain a sample article, artwork, logo, and general information about the HPA Program.

HPDA

High Pollution Advisory

- Carpool
- Telework
- Take Transit

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www.capitolrideshare.com

Oh No - It's Ozone!

Things are heating up! With the warm weather comes the inevitable ozone pollution and particulate problems and High Pollution Advisories (HPA). To communicate this, each week there will be an Air Quality Forecast issued by the Department of Environmental Quality and reported by Capitol Rideshare to State employees in Maricopa County. Additionally, on days when ozone levels are in danger of reaching or exceeding the health standard, a High Pollution Advisory (HPA) will be issued. This information will be posted at your agency as well as on our website.

We need your help! Capitol Rideshare encourages you to participate in the High Pollution Advisory Program by reducing your commute; especially on High Pollution Advisory Days. And if you do, log on to www.capitolrideshare.com and enter the HPA Day Contest! Just tell us who you are and what mode you used. At the end of the month, we will be drawing winners from the pool of names! The more times you use an alternate mode on HPA days, the more chances you have to win!

Watch for posted signs and emails that will alert you. If you are not already using an alternate mode of transportation, we want to encourage you to consider it. Even if you are only able to reduce your commute one day a week, it will make a difference - especially on High Pollution Advisory Days. If possible, telework, bus, or carpool. Even if you are not a regular carpooler, perhaps you can find someone who you can share the ride with on High Pollution Advisory Days. Capitol Rideshare can help you find someone to share the ride. Visit www.capitolrideshare.com and you can even do your own online matchlist!

Other warm weather pollution reducing actions include re-fueling your car after dark, not using drive-thru options, and bringing your lunch or eating at a cafeteria or restaurant within walking distance, thereby avoiding noontime driving. Make sure tires are properly inflated and your car is tuned up. Other activities for the High Pollution Advisory Program include participating in the Clean Air Campaign "Summer Clean Air Challenge."

By checking your agency's website or by visiting www.capitolrideshare.com, you can receive the most recent Air Quality Forecast.

OZONE INFORMATION

What Causes "Bad" Ozone?

Motor vehicle exhaust, industrial emissions, gasoline vapors, and chemical solvents are some of the major sources of NO_x and VOC, also known as ozone precursors. Strong sunlight and hot weather cause ground-level ozone to form in harmful concentrations in the air. Many urban areas tend to have high levels of "bad" ozone, but other areas are also subject to high ozone levels as winds carry NO_x emissions hundreds of miles away from their original sources.

How Does "Bad" Ozone Affect Human Health and the Environment?

Repeated exposure to ozone pollution may cause permanent damage to the lungs. Even when ozone is present in low levels, inhaling it triggers a variety of health problems including chest pains, coughing, nausea, throat irritation, and congestion. It also can worsen bronchitis, heart disease, emphysema, asthma, and reduce lung capacity. Healthy people also experience difficulty in breathing when exposed to ozone pollution. Because ozone pollution usually forms in hot weather, anyone who spends time outdoors in the summer may be affected, particularly children, the elderly, outdoor workers and people exercising.

Ground-level ozone damages plant life and is responsible for 500 million dollars in reduced crop production in the United States each year. It interferes with the ability of plants to produce and store food, making them more susceptible to disease, insects, other pollutants, and harsh weather. "Bad" ozone damages the foliage of trees and other plants, ruining the landscape of cities, national parks and forests, and recreation areas.