

Household Tips for Reducing Ground-Level Ozone

- **Use water-based paints**, stains, and solvents.
- **Use paint brushes** and rollers instead of spray paint.
- **Tightly cap all solvents** (degreasers, paint thinners, gasoline) and store away from heat and sunlight.
- **Use electric or manual lawn equipment**, or gas-powered models



that were made after 1999 (they have pollution controls).

- **Keep lawn equipment well maintained.**
- **Mow your**

lawn or do yardwork in the evening or early morning.

- **Use a funnel to refuel equipment.**
- **Avoid using lighter fluid** to start your barbeque. Use a charcoal chimney or electric starter instead.

Where is ozone monitored?

Currently, ozone concentrations in the Colorado Springs region are measured at two monitoring stations, located at the US Air Force Academy and Manitou Springs.

What is the ozone status of the Colorado Springs area?

Since May 30, 2008, the EPA has required a new, more stringent, 8-hour ozone standard. This standard is 0.075 ppm (parts per million) and is based on a three-year rolling average of the annual fourth-highest daily maximum 8-hour average. Our region is in attainment for the new standard, but ozone levels in our urbanized area have increased from 79% of the new 8-hour ozone standard in 1998 to 97% of the standard in 2007.

How can you avoid unhealthy exposure to ozone?

The air quality index (AQI) is a scale used to report actual levels of ozone, carbon monoxide, and other common pollutants in the air. The AQI is divided into categories that correspond to different levels of health concern. The higher the AQI value, the greater the concern. The AQI for the Manitou Springs monitoring station can be found at <http://colorado.gov/airquality/aqi.aspx>.

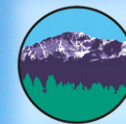
For more information:

Visit www.ppacg.org or call 719.471.7080. PPACG is the lead air quality planning agency for the Colorado Springs Metro Area and involves local governments, state agencies, community groups, and citizens in efforts to improve the region's air quality.

Ozone Pollution

in the Pikes Peak region

Simple things each of us can do every day to help keep our air clean.



Pikes Peak Area
Council of Governments
Communities Working Together

www.ppacg.org

What is ozone?

Unlike air pollutants such as carbon monoxide, ozone doesn't come from a particular source like the tailpipe of your car. Ozone forms when sunlight causes a chemical reaction between hydrocarbons and nitrogen oxides.

What does that mean?

It means that there are things all around us each day that give off



emissions — things like automobiles, industrial plants, gas-powered lawn equipment, and oil-based paints, solvents, and stains. When

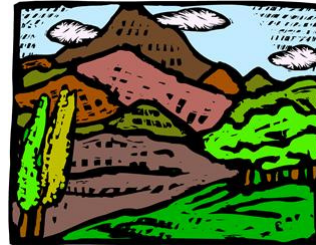
these emissions combine with other pollutants in the air, heat and sunlight cause them to form ozone.

Wait — aren't we trying to protect the ozone layer?

Yes! There are two kinds of ozone: stratospheric ozone, which is the layer of ozone miles above the earth that protects us from the sun's harmful rays; and ground-level ozone, which causes breathing and other problems when a person is exposed to high levels. Just remember "good up high and bad nearby." This pamphlet focuses on ground-level ozone.

How does ozone affect your health?

Short-term (1–3 hours) and long-term (6–8 hours) exposure to ground-level ozone has been linked to



a number of health effects. Exposure to ozone can make people more susceptible to respiratory infections, result in lung inflammation, and aggravate pre-existing respiratory conditions such as asthma.

Other health effects include decreased lung function and increased respiratory problems such as chest pain and coughing. These effects usually occur when individuals are actively exercising, working, or playing outdoors. The elderly, young children, and those with pre-existing respiratory conditions are especially at risk.

Does ozone affect anything besides people?

Yes, ozone also affects vegetation and ecosystems. This leads to reductions in agriculture and commercial forest yields and reduced growth and survival rates for tree seedlings. Excessive ozone exposure also increases the susceptibility of plants to diseases, pests, and other environmental stresses.

How can we reduce ground-level ozone?

Although ozone pollution sounds like a very complicated problem, there are lots of simple things each of us can do every day to help reduce ozone. Many of these strategies not only help the environment—they save you money!

Your Car

- **Avoid long periods of idling.** Reduce "warm-up idling" to 30 seconds and turn off your car if parked for more than 10 seconds.

- **Get gas in the evening or early morning.** Some gas vapors inevitably escape, and since ozone forms in sunlight, refueling at these times will help



reduce ozone levels.

- **Don't overfill your gas tank.** Stop at the click; it helps to reduce vapors.

- **Get your gas cap tested.** A faulty gas cap can allow a gallon of gas to evaporate every 15 days.

- **Maintain your vehicle.** A well-maintained vehicle pollutes less than one that is maintained poorly.