It's Not Just a "Summer Thing"

Smog Exists Year-round

Smog! It's not just here in the sweltering summer months - though that is a common misconception. The main culprits of smog are two separate types of pollution: ozone and particulate matter (PM). Ozone is caused by emissions from automobiles, smokestacks, lawn mowers, and other chemicals. Particulate matter, such as dust, soot and ash, comes from a variety of sources including wood burning, diesel and gasoline engines, factories, and power plants, most of which are present year-round.

Think you're coming down with the flu? It might not be the bug at all - it could be the result of air pollution. PM can actually cause flu-like symptoms, such as aggravating existing respiratory and cardiovascular problems, and irritating the eyes, nose and throat. It doesn't take long to feel the effects of air pollution - adverse health effects have been associated with exposures to PM as short as one day.

Similar to smog levels during summertime, the weather influences the levels of PM in the fall and winter air as well. Colder temperatures result in more wood burning, which increases particulate levels. Dry weather and lack of wind or precipitation can leave the PM suspended in the air for a longer period of time, causing potential health problems.

The Hamilton County Department of Environmental Services, Air Quality Management Division, measures the levels of PM in the air for Southwestern Ohio. This information is placed in the Air Quality Index (AQI), which is provided to the local media. To learn more about PM and other air quality issues, please visit www.hcdoes.org or call (513) 946-7777.

Clean Air Challenge!

Businesses and Kids Can Make a Difference

Ready for a little friendly competition? Don't wait until Earth Day to showcase your company's environmental savvy. Does your company do their share for cleaner air everyday? If so, tell us about it by emailing smog@okl.org. If chosen, we will feature your company in the May issue of Cleaner Horizons so everyone can learn from your example. If your company isn't making strides against air pollution - what are you waiting for? It's never too late to get involved. Email us by April 1, 2004, and let us know what you're doing for cleaner air!

Are you too young to work but old enough to do your share? All kindergarten through twelfth-grade students are invited to participate in the Do Your Share for Cleaner Air Calendar Contest. The deadline for entries is May 30, 2004, so visit www.doyourshare.org for a copy of the rules and an entry form and get those creative juices flowing today!

The Regional Ozone Coalition (ROC) is a voluntary organization of local governments, organizations and businesses committed to reducing smog in Boone, Butler, Campbell, Clermont, Hamilton, Kenton and Warren counties.
Clean Cities Has New Home, New Coordinator

Submitted By Sue Leitner, Clean Cities Coordinator

The Hamilton County Department of Environmental Services (HCDOES) is now home to the Tri-State Clean Fuels Network, one of more than 80 Clean Cities Coalitions in the United States. Clean Cities is a voluntary federal program designed to accelerate and expand the adoption of alternative fuel vehicles (AFVs) in urban communities. AFVs help reduce pollution and our country's dependence on imported oil.

Local businesses, municipal governments, regional air quality organizations and others are Clean Cities stakeholders. The United States Department of Energy sponsors the program and offers financial support for projects that result in adoption of clean fuels vehicles or the development of refueling stations.

As the new Greater Cincinnati Clean Cities Coordinator, I will be working to build a coalition of interested stakeholders, to identify existing and potential AFV fleets and refueling stations, and to ensure stakeholder commitments to the program. For more information about our local Clean Cities program, please contact me at:

Sue Leitner, Clean Cities Coordinator
Hamilton County Department of Environmental Services
250 William Howard Taft Road
Cincinnati, OH 45219
(513) 946-7772 or sue.leitner@hamilton-co.org
www.CleanCitiesCincinnati.org

We’re Here to Help!

We are gearing up for a great year at the ROC. Community outreach continues to be critical as we work to educate the Tri-state on the new clean air standards. PM 2.5 will create increased awareness that air quality concerns are not just a summer-time inconvenience, but rather, a year-round challenge that impacts the very essence of our quality of life.

Also, this year we’re excited to reintroduce Cincinnati's Clean Cities Program managed by Sue Leitner. She'll work with interested stakeholders and ROC members on clean air initiatives through the use of alternative fuels.

As an engaged ROC member, you can make a difference. In 2004, we must encourage positive environmental decision-making as represented in our Do Your Share for Cleaner Air campaign. In addition, please extend and promote these clean air principles to your home, work and recreation. Thank you for your commitment and support.

Rick Geise, 2004 ROC Chair
Griffin Industries, Inc.

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We’re Here to Help!

The Regional Ozone Coalition (ROC) is here to help you do your share for cleaner air! The ROC promotes voluntary actions that employers and citizens can take to help reduce ground-level ozone - the primary source of smog. We can help you develop and promote these voluntary actions within your company!

The ROC serves as a resource so you can take action within your company, especially on smog alert days. The ROC can assist you in developing a smog notification system among employees or an enticing incentive program. We can also provide you with free materials that promote environmentally friendly habits and tips.

We are available to come to your company and present information to your staff regarding the health aspects of smog, habits to improve air quality or the RideShare program. Or, if you have an air quality topic in mind, please call us and we will do our best to accommodate you.

If you are interested in setting up a presentation, becoming a member of the ROC or have any questions or concerns, please visit our website at www.doyourshare.org or call 1-800-621-SMOG. There are many ways that businesses can do their share for cleaner air.

Cleaner Horizons is brought to you by Kate Barnett, O KI Intern, and Amy Miller, HCDOES Public Affairs Intern.

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