



What you need to know about...

Helping Prevent Air Pollution

Ozone (smog) and fine particle (soot) pollution. can be especially dangerous for the young and the old, people who work or exercise outdoors, and those with heart or lung disease, including asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD). Ozone smog is a problem on hot summer days, but particle pollution can be a problem at any time of the year.

Air pollution causes both immediate and long term health problems. Shortness of breath, coughing, wheezing, asthma attacks, and chest pain can occur. Science has shown it can also cause strokes, heart attacks and premature death. Exposure to chronic air pollution can also put you at risk of lung disease as you grow older.

National laws like the Clean Air Act, as well as state and local requirements, have helped to improve air quality. However, medical research continues to show that air pollution is still dangerous at concentrations once considered safe.

Power plants, big factories and diesel trucks pollute the air, but so can the actions of individuals. Here's how you can help protect your health and community year-round:

- Drive only when necessary, combine errands and keep a light touch on the accelerator
- Don't idle your vehicle engine
- If the "check engine" light goes on, have your mechanic find and fix the problem

- Use your transit system and use healthier alternatives to driving like cycling, walking, or telecommuting.
- Choose the cleanest car you can –see www.epa.gov/greenvehicle
- Use cleaner electric or manual alternatives to gasoline-powered yard equipment.
- Conserve electricity to prevent power plant pollution at the other end of the wire.
 - Use compact florescent light bulbs
 - Purchase "Energy Star" appliances
 - Get a programmable home thermostat
 - Insulate and weatherstrip your home
- Compost - don't burn - leaves and grass clippings in your yard.
- Convert your fireplace from wood to cleaner burning natural gas.

Pay attention to "Air Pollution Action Days", when air quality will be especially bad. Taking action on these days will help improve air quality precisely when it will have greatest impact.

Tell your public officials you support clean air and want them to enforce existing laws and support policies that reduce air pollution! Sign up for Action Alerts that tell you when and how public officials can make a decision for cleaner air at www.lungchicago.org.