



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Yolo-Solano Air Quality Management District**  
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### Get Ready to Spare The Air!

**(Davis, CA)** – The Spare The Air season officially starts May 1st in the Yolo-Solano Air Quality Management District (District), which includes all of Yolo County and the northeastern portion of Solano County that contains Dixon, Rio Vista and Vacaville.

When the AQI for ground-level ozone pollution is regionally forecast to reach 126 or higher, a Spare The Air is issued asking all residents to lower their emissions and reduce their exposure to air pollution. It's important for everyone to not only take steps to help improve the air they breathe but learn why air pollution is bad for their health.

#### What is ozone and why is it harmful?

As temperatures start to rise so does ground level ozone, which is one of the pollutants that poses the greatest threat to human health in the U.S. Ground level ozone is created by chemical reactions between nitrogen oxides (NOx) and volatile organic compounds (VOCs) in the presence of sunlight. Since Northern California summers are full of hot and sunny days, ozone forms in greater quantities in our region. With the formation of so much ozone so close to the ground, people, pets and animals breathe it in.

Ozone pollution can affect anyone, regardless of health, fitness level, or age. Ozone can damage the tissues of the respiratory tract, causing inflammation and irritation, and result in symptoms such as coughing, chest tightness, and worsening of asthma symptoms. Exposure to ozone can also reduce the volume of air people breathe and cause shortness of breath. The severity of ozone's health effects can vary among individuals but those who are most susceptible are young children, pregnant women, outdoor workers, the elderly and those with respiratory illnesses such as COPD or asthma. Ozone is so harmful, it even affects the productivity of plant life, damaging cells and leaf tissue, and even damages materials such as rubber and plastics.

#### Actions to take on a Spare The Air Day

Since almost 70% of the of the region's ozone comes from cars, trucks, locomotives, buses, motorcycles and agricultural and construction equipment, when a Spare The Air is issued, residents and communities can:

- Drive less to help lower pollution.
- Postpone errands until the Spare The Air alert is over.
- Link errands into one big trip, minimizing cold starts to car engines and saving fuel.
- Take public transit to emit less greenhouse gases and help conserve energy.
- Walk or ride a bike, especially in the morning when ozone pollution is at its lowest.

### **How do I know if it is a Spare The Air day?**

Residents can find out if a Spare The Air has been issued by either:

- Signing up to receive email or text alerts at: [www.ysaqmd.enviroflash.org](http://www.ysaqmd.enviroflash.org).
- Visiting the District's website at: [www.ysaqmd.org](http://www.ysaqmd.org) where a red banner will appear at the top of the page.
- Downloading the free app called Sacramento Region Air Quality that covers the Sacramento Metropolitan, El Dorado, Feather River, Placer and Yolo-Solano air districts.

Spare The Air is an educational and advisory program that runs every year from May to October in the greater Sacramento region. Additional information about Spare The Air is available at: [www.sparetheair.com](http://www.sparetheair.com). For more information about the Yolo-Solano Air Quality Management District visit: [www.ysaqmd.org](http://www.ysaqmd.org). Connect with the District on Facebook at: [www.facebook.com/YoloSolanoAir](https://www.facebook.com/YoloSolanoAir) or on Twitter at: [www.twitter.com/YoloSolanoAir](https://www.twitter.com/YoloSolanoAir).

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