Rising temperatures from climate change will worsen and increase the number of unhealthy “bad air days.”

Elevated levels of ground pollution and extreme heat increases the risk of respiratory illnesses such as allergies, asthma, and lung cancer.

The most susceptible include people with lung and heart disease, pregnant women, outdoor workers, persons who are elderly and children.

Fold out this factsheet to learn more about what you can do to reduce your impact on air pollution.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), a scientific body on climate change, predicts that climate change is the cause of “declining air quality in our cities.”

PARTICULATE MATTER (PM):

Very small liquid and solid particles that float in the air. These particles, which come from cars and fireplaces, can penetrate into the lungs and bloodstream and cause serious health problems.

Particulates smaller than 2.5 microns (1/30 the width of human hair) are linked to respiratory diseases, heart attacks, and decreased lung function. Fine PM is projected to increase throughout Oakland and will be even greater in West Oakland.

Particulate Matter Entering the Human Body

1. Enters our respiratory system (lungs) through our nose and throat
2. Large PM is removed by coughing, sneezing and swallowing
3. Fine PM (smaller than 2.5 microns) can penetrate deep into the lungs causing lung and heart problems
4. Fine PM smaller than 2.5 microns can penetrate deep into the lungs and bloodstream

Other Emergency Contacts

WHO DO I CALL IN CASE OF AN EMERGENCY?

Life Threatening Call 911

California Air Resources Board (CARB)
Air Pollution Complaints 1-800-952-5588
Bay Area Air Quality Management District Issue Spare the Air alerts on days with poor air quality 1-800-HELP-AIR (1-800-435-7247)
EXAMPLES OF SOURCES OF POLLUTANTS

- carbon monoxide
- nitrogen dioxide
- ozone
- particulate matter
- toxic air contaminants

HOW DO I REDUCE MY EXPOSURE TO AIR POLLUTION?

1. Check air quality levels
2. On Spare the Air days, don’t exercise outdoors
3. On Spare the Air days, do errands before 10 am if possible
4. Stay away from pollen sources
5. Have medication ready at hand, especially for those with respiratory problems

HOW DO I REDUCE MY IMPACT ON AIR POLLUTION?

1. Drive less and walk or take public transit
2. Combine errands to reduce trips
3. Buy local foods and goods
4. Maintain the recommended tire pressure for your car for the best fuel usage
5. Use furnaces and fireplaces only when necessary

ADAPTATION STRATEGIES THAT YOU CAN SUPPORT

1. Modifying the region’s Emissions Reduction Plan to account for the increase in air pollution from climate change
2. Developing Spare the Air alerts or other air quality warning systems that are in multiple languages and accessible to all communities
3. Developing public education and outreach programs to reduce emission-causing activities and limit exposure on high air pollution days

WHAT THE CITY OF OAKLAND CAN DO

1. Revise building design guidelines to address air quality
2. Provide resources to partner with community-based groups to develop and implement community education and outreach programs
3. Provide funding for air filter replacement for low-income households as well as those with chemical sensitivities and respiratory disabilities
4. Establish centrally located shelters or cooling centers for homeless and low-income residents

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO PROTECT YOUR COMMUNITY

1. Establish neighborhood leaders who are trained and charged with outreaching to local residents
2. Let others in your neighborhood know about air quality conditions and impacts
3. Identify public spaces that have air conditioning during heat events

EXAMPLES OF SOURCES OF POLLUTANTS

- Chest pain
- Headaches
- Reduced mental alertness
- Cough
- Difficulty breathing
- Lung inflammation
- Heart disease
- Asthma
- Premature death
- Cancer
- Chronic eye & lung irritation
- Headaches
- Dizziness

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