

OZONE ACTION PROGRAM¹

The Regional Clean Air Education Coalition includes the following counties:

- Knox
- Anderson
- Blount
- Cocke
- Grainger
- Jefferson
- Loudon
- Monroe
- Roane
- Scott
- Sevier
- Union

Purpose:

Decrease the formation of ground-level ozone during the summer in the 12-county area.

Goals:

- 1. Improve air quality through voluntary actions.**
- 2. Create public awareness and promote individual responsibility through education.**
- 3. Provide credible measures of air quality improvement efforts.**

The Coalition:

The Coalition assembles a group of people from various sectors of the community such as government, business and industry, education, civic and environmental organizations. The Coalition works on clean air initiatives in the 12-County Region. The purpose of the Coalition is to decrease the formation of ground-level ozone during the summer in the 12-county area. Ground-level ozone forms when pollutants from vehicles, paints and solvents, unburned fuel, and industrial sources “bake” in hot, sunny weather.

¹ Suggested Ideas for an Ozone Action Program come from the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality

The program warns the public about forecasted high ozone days, and asks for voluntary actions to reduce emissions of ozone forming pollutants.

The Ozone Action Program is a voluntary public education program coordinated by the Clean Air Education Coalition. It is a 12-county community-based program designed to reduce ozone-forming emissions caused by vehicles and other sources during the summer months in the Early Action Compact Region and surrounding counties.

There are two major areas in the education initiative. The Ozone Action Day Program and The Commuter Services Program.

- **The Ozone Action Day Program**

The Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation issues an ozone alert in the afternoon on the day before an elevated level of ozone is expected to occur. Announcements for an Ozone Action Day will then be broadcast through television and other news media. At the same time, a system of employer notifications will advise participating employers to notify their employees before the end of the working day. Ozone Action Day coordinators at each employer will be notified by phone or fax. They will then notify employees through announcements, email, or printed notices posted at workplace exits. On the Ozone Action Day, organizations and individuals can voluntarily take planned measures to reduce emissions of ozone precursor pollutants. Following an Ozone Action Day, efforts will be made to estimate emissions reductions from the actions taken.

- **The 12-County Area Commuter Services Program**
(to be completed)

Why Should We Have an Ozone Action Program?

Ground level ozone presents a significant air quality problem during the summer months. During *the period from 2000 through 2002* the area experienced *over 60 days* when federal air quality standards were *exceeded*.

While acting as a protective shield in the upper atmosphere, ozone at ground-level is a major element of urban smog. Ozone can lower resistance to diseases such as colds and pneumonia, damage lung tissue, intensify heart and lung disease, and cause coughing and throat irritation. At highest risk

are children, the elderly, and those with heart or respiratory diseases. Elevated levels of ozone can also harm vegetation, farm crops, and the Smoky Mountains.

Ultimately, achieving attainment for ozone (air quality better than the national standard) will result in a healthier environment for the region's citizens and work force, and make it more attractive for economic development and relocations.

Ozone Action Programs are being implemented in many cities across America. They are cost-effective and do not require new regulations or mandatory actions. The Ozone Action Program is entirely voluntary and depends on everyone to share the responsibility. Suggested starting ideas for an Ozone Action Program in the 12-county area are listed below:

Ozone Action Programs for:

- Academic/Educational Institutions
- Businesses
- Industrial Facilities
- State Government Agencies
- Local Government Agencies

