



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
July 12, 2023

MEDIA CONTACT: DEP Press Team, ra-epnews@pa.gov

DEP Declares Code Orange Air Quality Action Day for Ozone for July 13, 2023, in Multiple Areas of Pennsylvania

Harrisburg, PA – The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) has declared a **Code Orange** Air Quality Action Day for ozone for July 13, 2023, in the following areas of Pennsylvania:

- Philadelphia Area, which includes the counties of Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery, and Philadelphia;
- Lehigh Valley-Berks Area, which includes the counties of Berks, Lehigh, and Northampton;
- Susquehanna Valley Area, which includes the counties of Cumberland, Dauphin, Lancaster, Lebanon, and York.

Partly to mostly sunny skies and temperatures in the middle 90s will likely contribute to 8-hour average concentrations of ozone in the **Code Orange** range on Thursday. Residents are encouraged to check www.airnow.gov for current conditions in their area.

Ozone is formed when airborne chemicals such as nitrogen oxides and volatile organic compounds (called “precursors”) react with sunlight. High ozone levels are most common during summer months when there are long days with plentiful sunshine and high levels of ozone precursors combine. Although ozone precursors are most often generated by car exhaust and industrial air emissions, wildfire smoke can provide additional precursors. Ozone pollution is most common in densely populated areas with higher amounts of car exhaust and industrial air emissions.

On a **Code Orange** Air Quality Action Day, young children, the elderly, and those with respiratory problems, such as asthma, emphysema, and bronchitis, are especially vulnerable to the effects of air pollution and should limit outdoor activities.

Residents and businesses within the Air Quality Action Day areas are strongly encouraged to voluntarily help reduce ozone air pollution by:

- Driving less by carpooling or using public transportation;
- Combining errands to reduce vehicle trips;
- Limiting engine idling;
- Refueling cars and trucks after dusk; and
- Conserving electricity by setting air conditioning to a higher temperature and turning off lights that are not in use.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Air Quality Index (AQI) provides standardized color codes for forecasting and reporting daily air quality. Green signifies good air quality; Yellow means moderate air quality; Orange represents unhealthy pollution levels for sensitive groups of people; and Red warns of unhealthy pollution levels for all. An Air Quality Action Day is declared when the AQI is forecasted to be Code Orange or higher.

For more information, visit DEP at www.ahs.dep.pa.gov/AQPartnersWeb, EPA's AirNow at www.airnow.gov, Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission's Air Quality Partnership at www.airqualitypartnership.org or Air Quality Partnership of Lehigh Valley-Berks at www.airqualityaction.org.

For more information on the [Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection](#), please visit [the website](#) or follow DEP on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), or [LinkedIn](#).

#