

What can I do to help clear the air?



Reduce driving by linking trips, carpooling & using mass transit.



Don't top off your gas tank.

Avoid using aerosol spray products.



Make sure your fireplace doesn't smoke out your neighbors.



Keep your car maintained & tires properly inflated.

Set your heater to 68° & air conditioner to 78°



Barbecue on a gas grill.



Use a push or electric lawn mower.



Report vehicles with excessive tailpipe emissions by calling 1-800-28-SMOKE.

Why be concerned about air pollution?

Because it affects our health. Although reduced visibility may be the more obvious effect of air pollution, the health problems it causes are by far more serious. Chronic exposure to polluted air reduces lung capacity, lowers stamina, and leaves people more vulnerable to long-term respiratory problems.

What is the APCD?

The San Diego Air Pollution Control District (APCD) is a government agency that regulates sources of air pollution within the San Diego Air Basin. The County Board of Supervisors serves as the Air Pollution Control Board.

Its mission is to protect the public from the harmful effects of air pollution, achieve and maintain air quality standards, foster community involvement, and develop and implement cost-effective programs meeting state and federal mandates, considering environmental and economic impacts.

Safeguarding our air quality is the primary focus of our regulatory system. By controlling pollution, we can all breathe clean, healthful air.

Where can I get more information?

Contact the District at 858-586-2707 or visit www.sdapcd.org.



10124 Old Grove Road
San Diego, CA 92131
(858) 586-2600
www.sdapcd.org

Airing the Answers

Get the latest air quality information for San Diego County at www.sdapcd.org



What are clean air standards?

A clean air standard specifies the maximum concentration of a given air pollutant that can safely exist in the outside air. Both the federal and state governments have established air quality standards to provide an adequate margin of safety in protecting public health.

What is the AQI?

The Air Quality Index (AQI) is an index for reporting air quality. The purpose of the AQI is to help you understand what a pollutant's measured concentration means to your health.

Since different pollutants affect health at different concentrations, the AQI relates similar degrees of health effects to a uniform scale. The pollutant concentrations are "translated" to the AQI, which ranges from

Air Quality Index

301-500 Hazardous	Health warnings of emergency conditions
201-300 Very Unhealthy	A health alert — everyone may experience more serious health effects
151-200 Unhealthy	Everyone may begin to experience health effects
101-150 Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups	Sensitive individuals may experience health effects
51-100 Moderate	Air quality is acceptable
0-50 Good	Air quality is satisfactory

0 to 500. An AQI value of 100 generally corresponds to the national clean air standard for the pollutant. AQI values below 100 are generally thought of as satisfactory.

Does APCD issue air quality forecasts?

Using the Air Quality Index (AQI), next-day forecasts are issued at 4:30 p.m. each weekday and, as necessary, on weekends. This forecast, along with the measured AQI for the day, is recorded in English and Spanish on a 24-hour message line at (858) 586-2800 and is available at www.sdapcd.org (under Citizen & Business, Current Air Quality).

How can I find out current air quality?

The District conducts air sampling at nine monitoring stations located throughout the region. The public can view the pollutant concentrations currently being recorded at these stations at www.sdapcd.org (under Citizen & Business, Current Air Quality).

How is smog formed?

Ozone, the chief component of smog, is not directly emitted as a pollutant but rather is formed in the atmosphere when hydrocarbons and oxides of nitrogen react in the presence of sunlight.

Is ozone good or bad?

Ozone can be good or bad depending on where in the atmosphere it is located. Ozone occurs naturally in the Earth's upper atmosphere where it creates a protective layer, shielding all life from the sun's damaging ultraviolet radiation. At ground level, ozone is harmful because it's unhealthy to breathe.

What is particulate matter?

Particulate matter consists of tiny particles that can be inhaled into the lungs. The greatest concern is for those 10 microns or less in diameter that can bypass the respiratory

tract's natural filtering system. Microscopic particles that measure 10 microns or less are called PM₁₀ and those 2.5 microns or smaller are called PM_{2.5}.

What are air toxics?

Toxic air pollutants are those that are known or suspected to cause cancer or other serious health effects. Air toxics may produce health effects at extremely low levels, and some may accumulate in the body from repeated exposures. There are no clean air standards for toxic air contaminants because there are no health-based, acceptable levels of exposure.

What is global warming?

Global warming refers to an average increase in the temperature of the atmosphere near the Earth's surface that can contribute to changes in global climate patterns.

What are greenhouse gases?

Gases that trap heat in the atmosphere are often called greenhouse gases because they prevent heat from escaping to space, somewhat like the glass panes of a greenhouse. Carbon dioxide (CO₂) is the greenhouse gas emitted in the largest quantity (not to be confused with the air pollutant carbon monoxide or CO).

What role do motor vehicles play?

Motor vehicles are San Diego County's leading source of air pollution and the largest contributor to greenhouse gases. Reducing vehicle emissions is essential to achieve clean air and to slow the rate of global warming.

The California Air Resources Board (ARB) has created statewide programs to encourage cleaner cars, cleaner fuels, and alternative means of transportation. For more information, visit www.driveclean.ca.gov.