

Little Steps. Big Impact.

You Can Make a Difference

The Omaha Metro area has a problem in the hot summer months. **It's ozone.** This summer you can help improve the air quality by taking a few small steps that will make a big difference. Ozone pollution affects health and the environment. We're a growing city and that means ozone pollution is increasing. Increased ozone is caused by increased vehicle emissions, industry, fires and in the summer months ozone is compromised even more by hot weather.

Please be part of the solution by taking Little Steps to make a Big Difference.

Think Three.

- 1 Use active transportation.** Bicycle or walk. Don't drive everywhere.
- 2 Give transit a try.** Starting May 1, 2015 you can purchase a ten ride Metro Transit pass with transfers for just \$7.50 on-line at www.littlestepsbigimpact.com
- 3 Take little steps.** Here are just a few and you can see more ideas on our website at www.littlestepsbigimpact.com or at www.omahacommuterchallenge.org
 - Refuel your car or lawnmower in the cooler parts of the day so fumes can disperse overnight.
 - Drive less.
 - Avoid idling your car. Even 30 seconds uses more fuel than stopping and starting the engine.
 - Go electric or manual with mowers, leaf blowers and trimmers. Gas-powered models release as much as 25% unburned gasoline in the air.
 - Combine your errands.
 - Car pool for kid's practices and birthday parties or activities.

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On warm days especially, the air quality in our Metro area is compromised by groundlevel ozone emissions. Ground-level ozone is a component of smog that is produced when nitrogen oxides (NOx) from fuel combustion combine with volatile organic compounds (VOCs) – such as fumes from gas – and “cook” in the summer heat. Emissions from industrial facilities and electric utilities, motor vehicle exhaust, gasoline vapors, and chemical solvents are some of the major sources of NOx and VOCs. Ozone generally increases between the months of April and October.

Ozone plays a much different role, depending on whether it is at ground level or six miles up in the second layer of atmosphere. Ozone up high protects us from UV rays. Ozone at ground level is a pollutant that affects our lung health, especially for the elderly, children and people with heart and lung conditions.

Facts to Think About

Reducing 1,000 cars per day on the metropolitan area’s streets and highways would eliminate:

- 255 pounds of carbon monoxide
- 35 pounds of volatile organic compounds
- 5.7 tons of carbon dioxide

Improving air quality would:

- Decrease asthma attacks
- Reduce hospital admissions for breathing related illnesses
- Reduce the risk of the metro area falling below air quality standards and being in “non-attainment.”
 - Non-attainment status would mean stricter pollution controls
 - Increased paperwork and reporting for businesses
 - More state oversight and control by the Environmental Protection Agency.