

Be Ozone Aware

This year, during **Air Quality Awareness Week**, we will be focusing on ground-level ozone. High in the Earth's atmosphere, ozone is helpful to humans because it protects us from harmful solar radiation. At ground-level, ozone is an air pollutant. Stay tuned this week to learn more about ozone in Colorado and how you can help improve air quality!

How is ozone formed?

Ozone is formed through a reaction of nitrogen oxides (NO_x) or volatile organic compounds (VOCs) with atmospheric oxygen in the presence of sunlight. In Colorado, "ozone season" is from the beginning of May to the end of September because that is the time of year when it is the warmest and sunniest.

What can YOU do to help improve air quality?

One of the biggest sources of NO_x in Colorado is from cars, trucks and SUVs. You can improve air quality by lowering the number of car trips you take:

- Eliminate/Combine car trips
- Carpool
- Use public transit and check out the new regional **bus service**
- Don't **idle your vehicle**
- **Simplestepsbetterair.org**

Where does NO_x come from?

- Industrial plants and factories
- Oil and gas
- Lawn and garden
- Cars, trucks, SUVs

Where do VOCs come from?

- Industrial plants and factories
- Oil and gas
- Paints and solvents
- Personal care products
- Cars, trucks, SUVs
- Lawn and garden
- Biogenic sources: plants

Happy 20th anniversary AirNow!

Check out the air quality in your area at **www.airnow.gov** or **www.colorado.gov/airquality**.



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