

# ***NEWS RELEASE***

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Air Quality Awareness Week**

The Regional Air Pollution Control Agency (RAPCA) and the Miami Valley Regional Planning Commission (MVRPC) would like remind everyone that Air Quality Awareness Week is April 30<sup>th</sup> through May 4<sup>th</sup>.

RAPCA and MVRPC are constantly working to help make the air we breathe cleaner and safer for area citizens. These efforts are done in a variety of ways, including: regulating local industry, promoting voluntary programs to reduce air pollution, encouraging carpooling, and reducing traffic congestion.

In recent years, RAPCA has led efforts to retrofit diesel school buses with pollution controls to reduce diesel emissions and promote a woodstove change-out program to remove old, dirty inefficient wood stoves with cleaner burning EPA certified wood stoves.

Additionally, MVRPC has coordinated the regional Rideshare Program since 1979. It provides people with a free list of others who are interested in carpooling to work/college. Fewer cars on the road mean less air pollution. A new initiative called Drive Less, Live More ([www.drivelesslivemore.org](http://www.drivelesslivemore.org)) rewards residents who use alternative forms of transportation, including carpooling, riding the bus, cycling, or walking, instead of driving alone.

RAPCA and MVRPC also work together to issue Air Pollution Advisories whenever air pollution levels are expected to rise to unhealthy levels.

In late 2006, U.S. EPA strengthened the fine particulate rule in an effort to protect the public's health even more than before. Due to these changes, we expect to issue more Air Pollution Advisories for the Miami Valley Region.

You can help reduce pollution in your community by following these guidelines. These recommendations are especially important when **ground-level ozone** is expected to be unhealthy:

- Choose a cleaner commute—share a ride to work or use public transportation.
- Combine errands and reduce trips.
- Bicycle or walk to errands when possible.
- Defer use of gasoline-powered lawn and garden equipment for later in the day, or for days when the air quality is better.
- Refuel cars and trucks after dusk.
- Limit engine idling.
- Get regular engine tune ups and car maintenance checks (especially for the spark plugs).
- Avoid spilling gas and don't "top off" the tank. Replace gas tank cap tightly.
- Properly dispose of household paints, solvents and pesticides. Store these materials in airtight containers.
- Conserve electricity and set your air conditioner at a higher temperature.
- Paint with a brush, not a sprayer.
- Buy low VOC paints for indoor and outdoor painting jobs.

You can help prevent or reduce unhealthy levels of **particle pollution** with these actions:

- Reduce or eliminate fireplace and wood stove use.
- Avoid using gas-powered lawn and garden equipment.
- Avoid burning leaves, trash and other materials.
- Use household, workshop, and garden chemicals in ways that keep evaporation to a minimum, or try to delay using them when poor air quality is forecast.
- Replace your car's air filter and oil regularly.

For more information go to the following websites:

[www.rapca.org/daily/aqstats.htm](http://www.rapca.org/daily/aqstats.htm)

[www.miamivalleyair.org](http://www.miamivalleyair.org)

[www.airnow.gov](http://www.airnow.gov)

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