



Immediate Release

May 10, 2017

Media Contact

Julian Hills, Public Information Specialist, (727) 464-4600

Pinellas: Air Pollution Advisory issued for Wednesday

Elevated ozone levels may affect the elderly, very young or citizens with respiratory ailments

- Air Quality Index considered “Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups” for today
- Affected citizens should take into consideration before planning outdoor activities
- The alert remains in effect until dusk, elevated levels could occur Thursday
- Conditions which could lead to today's elevated levels are forecast to be the same tomorrow.

The Pinellas County division of Air Quality is issuing an Air Pollution Advisory due to elevated levels of the pollutant ozone. This advisory is effective immediately for today, Wednesday, May 10. Individuals with pre-existing respiratory ailments, the elderly or the very young may want to take this into consideration when planning any outside activities. This alert remains in effect until dusk today; however, ozone levels typically decrease during the night.

Ozone is caused by emissions of certain chemicals called oxides of nitrogen and volatile organic material in the presence of sunlight. These emissions come from industrial facilities, vehicle exhaust, gasoline vapors and chemical solvents. It is possible that high pressure atmospheric conditions, intense sunlight and brushfires in neighboring counties may have contributed to the elevated levels.

Ozone pollution is a concern during summer months because strong sunlight and hot weather result in harmful ozone concentrations in the air in urban environments, but can still reach high levels during colder months. Yesterday afternoon, Pinellas County experienced an Air Quality Index of “Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups” for ozone between 5:00 and 6:00 p.m. Prior to the current advisory. Pinellas County last experienced an “Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups” AQI in 2014 due to ozone.

Conditions which could lead to today's elevated levels are forecast to be the same tomorrow. Moderate levels of ozone may still occur. If you have any questions or need further assistance, please call: Pinellas County Air Quality at (727) 464-4422. The public is encouraged to stay alert to any news coverage or health advisories. For current air quality information, visit www.airnow.gov or www.dep.state.fl.us/Air/air_quality/county/pinellas.htm.

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