



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 2, 2016

Contact:

Lyz Hoffman, District Public Information & Education Specialist, (805) 961-8819

Celebrate Air Quality Awareness Week 2016 Five Clean-Air Tips

SANTA BARBARA, Calif. — Air Quality Awareness Week starts today, and the Santa Barbara County Air Pollution Control District has clean-air tips to share. Cars and trucks are a major source of smog-forming emissions in our county. “The biggest thing we can do to help reduce smog is to drive less. When we can walk, bike, or take the bus instead of driving, that can make a big difference for air quality,” said Aeron Arlin Genet, District Director and Air Pollution Control Officer. “When we do need to use our cars, there are steps we can take to ensure that our cars are polluting less.”

Our five clean-air tips:

- 1) **Go car free.** May means CycleMAYnia, which offers a great excuse to ride your bicycle.
- 2) **Carpool and combine trips.**
- 3) **Keep your car tuned up and maintain your tire pressure.** A well-maintained car gets better fuel economy.
- 4) **Use our Old Car Buy Back Program.** The District will pay \$1,000 for your older vehicle if it meets certain requirements.
- 5) **Buy a clean-air car.** Automakers are offering electric, hybrid, and hydrogen fuel cell vehicles. Santa Barbara County has many charging stations and will be celebrating the opening of a hydrogen fueling station on May 13.

Ground-level ozone, a principal component of smog, forms when nitrogen oxides (NOx) — which can come from cars and other sources — and reactive organic compounds — which can come from gasoline vapors and other sources — chemically react in the presence of heat and sunlight. In Santa Barbara County, ozone season typically runs from April through October. On April 18, 2016, the county exceeded both the state and federal health-based ozone standards.

Studies have shown that exposure to ground-level ozone, even at very low levels, can lead to many respiratory health issues, particularly over time. Inhaling the pollution irritates and inflames the lungs.

“Air Quality Awareness Week presents a great opportunity for us to explore what changes we can make for our air and our communities,” said Arlin Genet.

Supported by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control, and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Air Quality Awareness Week offers an annual opportunity to learn more about air quality, how it affects health, and what can be done to reduce air pollution.

For more information on our air quality, visit www.OurAir.org.

###