

Clean Air Fact Sheet for Kids

Does Santa Barbara County Have Air Pollution?

Yes! Our problem is not as bad as in some areas (like Los Angeles), but we do sometimes breathe unhealthy air. On days with warm and still weather, the pollution from our cars and businesses can build up in our air. Sometimes strong winds can stir up particle pollution. Events like wildfires cause bad air days from smoke and particle pollution.

Where Does the Pollution Come From?

Most comes from cars and businesses like gas stations, dry cleaners, auto repair shops, painting operations, high-tech manufacturers, and oil and gas facilities. These businesses have to do extra work to reduce the pollution they cause. We also get pollution from ships traveling through the Santa Barbara Channel.

Types of Air Pollution

Our biggest air pollution problems are particle pollution and ozone. **Particle pollution** is made up of tiny, tiny pieces of metal, dust, smoke, chemicals, air toxics, and other particles. Particle pollution comes from many places like a car's tailpipe or a fire. **Ozone** air pollution is formed when different chemicals "cook" in

the hot sun. Ozone is colorless—you can't see it. But it is often found in the smoggy mixture of tiny particles and other chemicals that you can see.



Is this the same ozone that protects us from the sun? Yes!

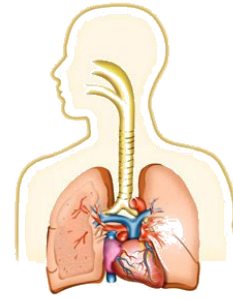
The ozone layer is made up of the same substance. But way up in the stratosphere, where it occurs naturally, nobody has to breathe it. Down here where we breathe, ozone in the air is unhealthy! ***Ozone is Good Up High and Bad Nearby!***

Air Pollution and Health

Air pollution affects everyone. It can cause heart and lung discomfort for healthy people and serious problems for people who already have weak hearts or trouble breathing.

Air pollution can make your eyes hurt, give you headaches, and make you

cough. In addition, it forces your heart and lungs to work harder to provide oxygen to your body. It can permanently damage your



lungs so they don't work as well later in your life. Air pollution also contributes to the development of diseases including bronchitis, emphysema, and cancer.

That's why it's important that we all do our part to end air pollution, so we can all breathe a little easier!

Amazing FACTS!

- ★ We breathe about 2 gallons of air every minute!
- ★ Air pollution affects children more than adults because kids breathe more air for their size and spend more time playing hard outdoors.
- ★ Santa Barbara County's air has become healthier in the last few decades! 95% of days in 2011 were "good" air days.
- ★ America's 11 million diesels — buses, trucks, trains, ships, and construction equipment — releases air pollution that is worse than secondhand cigarette smoke.

How big is particle pollution?

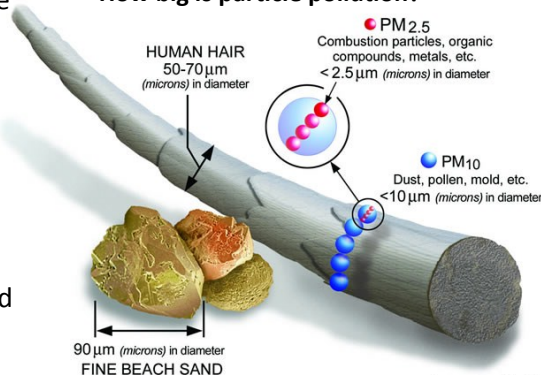


Image courtesy of the U.S. EPA



Things *You* Can Do For Clean Air



Ask your mom or dad if it's OK to ride your **bike or walk**. You'll get lots of exercise and reduce air pollution, too!



Try to **carpool**, too. It's **COOL** to pool!



Or take the **bus**!



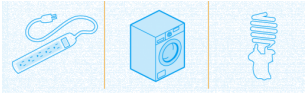
Encourage your mom and dad to carpool, bike, or take the bus to work—even if only one day a week. If they need help finding a carpool partner, register with Traffic Solutions Online at <http://www.trafficsolutions.info/carpool.htm>



When your family **barbecues**, start the charcoal with an electric or chimney-type fire starter instead of lighter fluid. Or, if you can, replace your barbecue with a one powered by propane.



Help your family **reduce, reuse, and recycle!**



Conserve **energy!** Turn off the lights, computers & TVs when not in use. Run the dishwasher and washing machine only when full.



Become your family's **air quality expert**. During warm weather, keep track of the air quality in your area. Air quality readings from the previous day are found on the page Today's Air Quality at www.OurAir.org.

