



## **Baton Rouge Clean Air Coalition Voluntary Ozone Action Program**

### **What is the Clean Air Coalition?**

The Baton Rouge Clean Air Coalition is a group of people from various sectors of the community such as government, business and industry, education, civic and environmental organizations. The Coalition works on clean air initiatives in the Baton Rouge area.

### **What are the Clean Air Coalition goals?**

- 1. Improve air quality through voluntary actions.**
- 2. Create public awareness and promote individual responsibility through education.**
- 3. Provide credible measures of air quality improvement efforts.**

### **What is the Clean Air Coalition Voluntary Ozone Action Program?**

The Ozone Action Program is a voluntary driving curtailment and public education program coordinated by the Clean Air Coalition. It is a community-based program designed to reduce ozone-forming emissions caused by vehicles and other sources during the summer months in the Baton Rouge ozone non-attainment area.

It consists of two basic elements -- *The Baton Rouge Area Commuter Services Program* and *The Ozone Action Day Program*. Area employers will be informed of the Ozone Action Program and provided with a menu of options for participating in the program. Technical

assistance will also be provided, if needed, for implementation of selected options. An incentives program will provide recognition for those participating in the program.

### ◆The Baton Rouge Area Commuter Services Program

As part of its ongoing transportation control measures (TCMs) program, the Capital Region Planning Commission (CRPC) will provide local employers with information on TCM options that they might wish to voluntarily employ on an extended basis. Technical assistance with implementation of selected measures will also be provided. Estimates of emissions reductions realized through the extended TCM program will be documented.

### ◆The Ozone Action Day Program

Based on a prescribed decision-making process, the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) will issue an ozone alert in the morning on the day BEFORE an elevated level of ozone is expected to occur. Announcements for an Ozone Action Day will then be broadcast through television and other news media. At the same time, a system of employer notification will advise participating employers to notify their employees before the end of the working day. Ozone Action Day coordinators at each employer would be notified by E-mail, phone or fax. They would then notify employees through announcements, E-mail, or printed notices posted at workplace exits. On the Ozone Action Day, organizations and individuals can voluntarily take planned measures to reduce emissions of ozone precursor pollutants. Following an Ozone Action Day, efforts will be made to estimate emissions reductions from the actions taken.

## Why is this program important?

Ground level ozone presents a significant air quality problem in the Baton Rouge area during the summer months. During 1990 through 2000, the Baton Rouge area experienced between 2 and 16 days each summer when the federal air quality standard for ozone was violated.

While acting as a protective shield in the upper atmosphere, ozone at ground level is a major element of urban smog. Ozone can lower resistance to diseases such as colds and pneumonia, damage lung tissue, intensify heart and lung disease, and cause coughing and throat irritation. At highest risk are children, the elderly, and those with heart or respiratory diseases. Elevated levels of ozone can also harm vegetation, farm crops, and forests.

Ultimately, achieving attainment for ozone (air quality better than the national standard) will result in a healthier environment for the region's citizens and work force, and make it more attractive for economic development and relocations.



## What is its purpose?

The purpose of the Ozone Action Program is to decrease the formation of ground-level ozone during the summer in the Baton Rouge ozone non-attainment area. (This area includes East Baton Rouge, West Baton Rouge, Ascension, Livingston, and Iberville Parishes.) Ground-level ozone forms when pollutants from vehicles, paints and solvents, unburned fuel, and industrial sources "bake" in hot, sunny weather. The program warns the public about forecasted high ozone days, and asks for voluntary actions to reduce emissions of ozone forming pollutants.

## How YOU Can Get Involved

Ozone Action programs are being implemented in many cities throughout the U.S. They are cost-effective and do not require new regulations or mandatory actions. The Ozone Action Program is entirely voluntary and depends on **EVERYONE** to share the responsibility. To become an Ozone Action Day participant, please contact a Clean Air Coalition member at the Capital Region Planning Commission (225) 383-5203; or at the Louisiana DEQ, (225) 765-0169. You may also email [assist@deq.state.la.us](mailto:assist@deq.state.la.us), or call RIDESHARE at (225) 344-RIDE (7433).