

# Utah Department of Environmental Quality Press Releases

## For the Year 2002

---

### Contents

44% of Chemical Weapons Safely Destroyed  
Air Quality Wood-Burn Season Ends Today  
"Clean Air Utah" Web Site Receives Recognition  
Department of Environmental Quality Changes Business Hours During Olympics  
DEQ Launches New "Choose Clean Air" Program and Web Site  
DEQ Supports Health Department Air Quality Proposal  
DEQ to Provide Environmental Information in Real Time  
Division of Air Quality Refutes American Lung Association's State of the Air Report  
Fish Advisory Issued for American Fork Creek  
Ozone Levels on the Rise  
Public Health Advisory: Drought Causing Low Flows, Less Dilution in Streams and Rivers  
Students Discover Health of Provo River  
Summit County Rancher Receives Water Quality Award  
Summer Ozone Season Ends  
Utah Celebrates 30 Years of Clean Water  
Utah Celebrates National Pollution Prevention Week September 16 - 22, 2002  
Utah DEQ Manager Receives National Recognition for Improving the Environment and Public Health  
Utahns to Participate in National Water Monitoring Day  
Utah Well Prepared to Comply With New Federal Animal Waste Rules  
Wasatch Front Enters Summer Ozone Season

---

## **Department of Environmental Quality Changes Business Hours During Olympics**

January 14, 2002

Contact:

Dianne Nielson, Executive Director, (801) 536-4402

(Salt Lake City) Beginning Feb. 8 through Feb. 24, 2002, the Utah Department of Environmental Quality's (DEQ) regular business hours will be modified in order to reduce traffic congestion during the 2002 Winter Olympic Games.

DEQ's regular business hours will be from 6 a.m. to 2 p.m., Monday through Friday, beginning Feb. 8 through Feb. 24. Public access to documents and services will be available during these hours. The purpose of this change is to assist in reducing the combined impacts of commuter traffic and Olympic-related traffic in Weber, Davis, Salt Lake and Utah counties.

This change includes all DEQ offices, which are:

DEQ, 150 N. 1950 West and 168 N. 1950 West, Salt Lake City

DEQ offices at the Cannon Health Building, 288 N. 1460 West, Salt Lake City

Air Monitoring Center, 2861 W. Parkway Blvd., West Valley City

---

## **Air Quality Wood-Burn Season Ends Today**

February 28, 2002

Contacts:

Rick Sprott, Director of the Utah Division of Air Quality, (801) 536-4022

Laura Vernon, DEQ Public Information Officer, (801) 536-4484

The Utah Department of Environmental Quality's "Red Light, Green Light" program, which curtails wood burning along the Wasatch Front during winter inversions, ends its tenth season today.

During the four-month season, which began Nov. 1, 2001, the Division of Air Quality called 8 "red" days and 11 "yellow" days in Salt Lake and Davis counties; 3 "red" days and 7 "yellow" days in Utah County; and 5 "red" and 9 "yellow" days in Weber County. Bear River Health Department voluntarily initiated a wood-burn program for Cache County beginning with the 2001-2002 season as a proactive measure to improve air quality. The local health department called 5 "red" and 22 "yellow" days in Cache County.

"The number of 'red' and 'yellow' days has increased during the past couple of years because we are using a more stringent particulate matter measure for PM2.5 rather than PM10," Air Quality Director Rick Sprott said. "We call 'red' and 'yellow' days at a lower level of pollution to reduce pollution during an inversion to avoid exceeding the health standard and provide the greatest possible protection to the public."

Some fairly strong inversions set up over the Wasatch Front valleys in late December and early January, and then again in early February. "The residents of the Wasatch Front did a great job at heeding air pollution warnings, which was extremely important during strong inversions," Sprott said. "Using the bus and TRAX, car pooling, and telecommuting during the Olympics also reduced pollution. Continuing these good habits would be the best possible Olympic legacy for Utah's air quality."

"Wood-burning conditions are identified as "Red, Yellow, Green" - similar to traffic lights. The program is used to notify citizens when they can burn wood in a fireplace, depending upon pollution levels. "Red" means burning is prohibited and people are asked to reduce vehicle trips and take the bus or TRAX. Likewise, industries are asked to minimize their release of air pollutants and ensure that air pollution control equipment is functioning properly. "Yellow" means a voluntary no burn and "green" means burning is allowed.

Particulate matter (PM2.5 and PM10) is the primary winter pollutant. Wood burning produces soot and dust that are components of particulate, as are emissions from vehicles and other engines. Fine particles can become lodged in delicate lung tissue, decreasing lung function, especially for people with respiratory and cardiovascular ailments.

---

## **Summit County Rancher Receives Water Quality Award**

April 17, 2002

Contacts:

Don Ostler, Utah Division of Water Quality Director (801) 536-6081  
Jerrold Richins, Calvin K. Sudweeks Award Recipient (435) 336-2204

The Utah Water Quality Board today honored rancher and community leader Jerrold Richins with the 2002 Calvin K. Sudweeks Award for exemplary leadership in improving water quality in Chalk Creek near Coalville, Utah.

By example and leadership, Richins championed water quality improvement of Chalk Creek, which had been listed as an impaired stream because of high erosion and sediment. Richins was instrumental in initiating the Chalk Creek Watershed Project and chaired the Chalk Creek Watershed Steering Committee responsible for planning and implementing water quality improvement practices. The project was sponsored by the Summit Soil Conservation District Board, of which Richins was a member for 12 years and served as chairman.

At the onset of the watershed project in 1991, he willingly stepped forward to not only implement but also demonstrate on his own land techniques for protecting stream banks. Since then, he has implemented and shared with others additional water quality improvement practices, such as managing agricultural waste runoff and sprinkler irrigation. Following his lead, more than 120 neighboring landowners have voluntarily adopted similar practices.

In 1997, Richins established a tour of his ranch to teach others about the watershed and ways to improve and protect water quality in an agricultural setting. To promote the sharing of ideas, he installed a permanent information center on his land. His education efforts have extended beyond his own community to other parts of Utah.

"Not only has Jerrold been a leader, but he has also influenced many others to undertake grassroots projects and practices to improve water quality," said Don Ostler, director of the Utah Division of Water Quality and executive secretary of the Utah Water Quality Board.

"It was a surprise to me to receive this award. I feel honored," Richins said.

The Calvin K. Sudweeks Award began in 1988 and is awarded annually by the Utah Water Quality Board to recognize an individual who has shown outstanding leadership in the water quality field. The award is named for a former state water quality director who was instrumental in leading Utah through dramatic changes in water quality, including the move to treat wastewater.

---

## **Division of Air Quality Refutes American Lung Association's State of the Air Report**

May 3, 2002

Contacts:

Rick Sprott, Utah Division of Air Quality Director (801) 536-4022  
Laura Vernon, DEQ Public Information Officer (801) 536-4484

The American Lung Association's State of the Air Report correctly recognizes the significant health problems associated with air pollution and the need to improve and maintain air quality across the nation and in Utah. The report's grading system may be misleading however, according to Rick Sprott, director of the Utah Division of Air Quality.

The system lumps cities with severe pollution such as Los Angeles and Houston into the same "grade" as those with only moderate problems such as Salt Lake City. The report also fails to use the latest data, which makes a significant difference for Utah.

No county in Utah has ever violated the new, stringent standards for ozone or PM2.5. Overall pollution levels have been decreasing for the last decade. However, pollution does still exceed health standards on some days, which can impact health. Steps taken since 1998 to reduce ozone have included:

- Lower volatility gasoline in Utah and Weber counties voluntarily provided by Utah refineries.
- Smoke Management Program to reduce exposure to ozone and particles generated by prescribed forest fires.
- Improved vehicle inspection and maintenance programs in Davis and Salt Lake counties.

The summer ozone alert season will begin on June 1, and we will all be asked to do our part to prevent pollution.

"We are past the point where we can take our air quality for granted," Sprott said. "Having clean air is something that we as individuals have to work on together."

---

## **Fish Advisory Issued for American Fork Creek**

May 21, 2002

Contacts:

Utah Department of Environmental Quality:  
Dave Wham, (801) 538-6052

The Utah Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), in conjunction with the Utah Department of Health and Utah County Health Department, is issuing a fish consumption advisory for brown and cutthroat trout from the North Fork of American Fork Creek.

Due to elevated arsenic levels in the fish meat, adults should limit their consumption of these trout to no more than one meal per month. Pregnant women, nursing mothers and children under age 12 should avoid eating any trout from the creek.

Results of a risk assessment show that eating more than one meal per month over a long period of time could result in an intake of arsenic that exceeds EPA health standards. Any health risk associated with eating the contaminated fish is based on long-term consumption and not tied to eating fish occasionally. No known illnesses have been associated with consuming trout from the creek.

This advisory does not specifically include rainbow trout harvested from Tibble Fork Reservoir and from the North Fork of American Fork Creek below Tibble Fork Reservoir.

Arsenic occurs naturally at low levels in our environment. The arsenic in American Fork Creek is believed to have come from both natural and past mining-related sources in American Fork Canyon. The USDA Forest Service plans to begin removing mine waste-related pollution sources this summer.

Fish consumption advisory signs will be posted at parking areas and river access points along the river. In addition, information about the advisory will be distributed at the USDA Forest Service fee station in American Fork Canyon.

DEQ, Utah Department of Health and Utah County Health Department will continue to monitor arsenic levels in the fish and water. The advisory will be updated as needed based on additional information.

[Click here for more information.](#)

Fish Consumption Advisory for Trout from the North Fork of American Fork Creek

The Utah Department of Environmental Quality, Utah Department of Health and the Utah County Health Department are advising the public of elevated arsenic levels in the meat of brown and cutthroat trout from the North Fork of American Fork Creek in Utah County. The advisory recommends that adults limit their consumption of trout taken from American Fork Creek to no more than one meal per month. Pregnant women, nursing mothers and children under age 12 should avoid eating any trout from the creek. This advisory is based on the agencies' review of fish contamination information provided by the USDA Forest Service.

Samples from brown and cutthroat trout taken from the creek were tested for heavy metals such as mercury, arsenic and lead. The data were assessed and the advisory issued based on risk-assessment methods developed by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Results of the assessment show that eating more than one meal per month of these fish over a long period of time could result in an intake of arsenic that exceeds the EPA carcinogen screening value for the element. Although no known illnesses have been associated with consuming trout from the North Fork of American Fork Creek, long-term exposure to arsenic is suspected of causing cancer in humans, and exposure to high levels of arsenic has been linked with gastrointestinal effects, anemia and liver damage.

It is important to note that the health risk associated with eating the contaminated fish is based on long-term consumption and not tied to eating fish occasionally.

This advisory does not specifically include rainbow trout harvested from Tibble Fork Reservoir and from the North Fork of American Fork Creek below Tibble Fork Reservoir. The Utah Division of Wildlife Resources (DWR) manages these waters as put-and-take fisheries. Hatchery rainbow trout are stocked several times per year by DWR and most of these fish are harvested by the fall. The agencies currently have no data concerning arsenic levels in these fish. However, it is believed that the stocked fish do not live in the environment long enough to accumulate significant levels of arsenic.

Fish take in contaminants from the water they live in and the food they eat. Older, larger, predatory fish tend to have more arsenic than younger, smaller fish because these contaminants build up in fish over time. Because arsenic is bound in the muscle tissue of organisms, it cannot be removed or significantly reduced by methods such as frying, baking, grilling, smoking or other processing activities.

Arsenic is a naturally occurring element and exists at low levels throughout our environment. The arsenic in American Fork Creek is believed to be from both natural and mining-related sources associated with mineral deposits in the canyon. The USDA Forest Service is moving forward with a project to isolate, contain or otherwise dispose of mining wastes in the North Fork of American Fork Canyon. The objective of the project is to minimize the contribution of heavy metals to the environment from past mining activities on National Forest System lands. The Forest Service plans to begin appropriate removal actions at these sites during the 2002 construction season.

Fish consumption advisory signs will be posted at parking areas and access points along the creek. In addition, information about the advisory will be distributed at the USDA Forest Service fee station in American Fork Canyon. The agencies will continue to monitor contaminant levels of fish in the watershed and will update the advisory, as needed, based on additional information.

Fish are a good source of readily digestible protein. They are low in fat and sodium, and the unique type of fats found in fish is believed to provide cardiovascular benefits to humans.

---

## **Wasatch Front Enters Summer Ozone Season**

May 31, 2002

Contacts:

Rick Sprott, Director, Division of Air Quality, (801) 536-4022

Bob Dalley, Manager, Air Monitoring Center, (801) 887-0762

Beginning Saturday, Wasatch Front residents will be asked to "Spare the Air" in an effort to reduce ozone, the primary ingredient in summertime smog. During the summer ozone season, which runs from June 1 through Sept. 30, the Division of Air Quality's Air Monitoring Center will call voluntary no-drive days and issue health advisories when pollution levels are expected to increase to unhealthful levels.

Now in its ninth season, the "Spare the Air" campaign aims to reduce summertime smog in Salt Lake, Davis, Utah and Weber counties. During a no-drive day, residents are asked to voluntarily reduce driving by carpooling or taking the bus or TRAX. Additionally, residents can help keep pollution levels down by filling the gas tank or mowing the lawn in the evening, avoiding use of gasoline-powered engines on polluted days and conserving energy.

"Every little bit that residents can do helps the air we breathe in big ways. High ozone levels threaten our children's health, especially those with asthma, and we must do a better job at protecting our most precious resource," said Rick Sprott, director of the Division of Air Quality.

Ozone is an invisible gas formed from vehicle emissions in the presence of heat and sunlight. It is a major health and environmental concern in urban counties during the summer.

Continued exposure to ozone can cause breathing problems, reduce lung function, irritate eyes and nasal passages and reduce resistance to colds and other infections.

Residents are encouraged to call the Air Pollution Hotline at 975-4009 in Salt Lake and Davis counties or (800) 228-5434 in Utah and Weber counties, or visit the Air Pollution Index Report website at: <http://www.deq.state.ut.us/eqamc/api.htm> for the latest air pollution information. Conditions are updated at least twice a day. Once in the morning and again in the afternoon.

---

## **DEQ Launches New "Choose Clean Air" Program and Web Site**

June 19, 2002

Contacts:

Rick Sprott, Division of Air Quality Director, (801) 536-4000  
Laura Vernon, DEQ Public Information Officer, (801) 536-4484

As our temperature moves into the 90s and higher, ozone levels around the Wasatch Front will begin to increase. The Utah Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) will continue to call "no-drive days" when exceptionally high ozone concentrations are forecast. To help residents know what other steps they can take, especially if they can't get out of their vehicles, DEQ has launched a new "Choose Clean Air" program and Web site at [www.cleanair.utah.gov](http://www.cleanair.utah.gov).

"The 'Choose Clean Air' program and Web site are designed to help people start thinking about their choices," said Rick Sprott, director of the Division of Air Quality. "We are still encouraging people to get out of their vehicles as much as possible, particularly on high ozone days. If they can't get out of their cars, there are still actions they can take."

By visiting the Web site, people can develop a daily plan of action, personalized to their needs, that includes steps they can take at home and at work as well as ways to drive less and drive smarter.

Restrictions placed on industry and other major sources over the last 20 years have made a big difference in cleaning up air quality. Automobiles manufactured after 1996 are also much cleaner than their earlier counterparts.

"Now, as our population continues to grow, we have reached a place where it is the things that individuals do collectively that make the biggest difference in our air quality," said Midvale Mayor JoAnn Seghini, who is also a member of the Air Quality Board.

Ozone can cause respiratory problems, especially in sensitive populations such as asthmatics, young children, and the elderly.

"Estimates are that one in three Utahns experiences some type of respiratory problem during high pollution periods, and emergency room visits and hospital admission for asthma increase about 24 hours after ozone levels are high," said Dr. Wayne Samuelson, a University of Utah pulmonary specialist and Air Quality Board member. "I know I'll be busy at the clinic when I see smoggy air on my way in to work."

Ground-level ozone, frequently referred to as summer smog, is formed when emissions from automobiles, industry, and other sources react to bright sunshine and high temperatures. The highest concentrations usually occur between 2 and 8 p.m.

"Because ozone is weather dependent, we recognize there are some things that are beyond our control. We are encouraging people to take steps for the things that are in their control," Sprott said.

---

## **Ozone Levels on the Rise**

July 5, 2002

Contact:

Laura Vernon, DEQ Public Information Officer, (801) 536-4484

The Department of Environmental Quality is advising residents along the Wasatch Front to limit their driving and engage in other activities to help reduce rising ozone levels.

Beginning this weekend, the Wasatch Front is expected to experience very hot temperatures for an extended period, which is likely to contribute to more ozone.

"Well above average temperatures are a definite concern because ozone levels increase as the temperature increases," said Rick Sprott, director of the Division of Air Quality. "Higher levels of ozone increase risk to everyone's health. By limiting their driving or taking other steps to 'Choose Clean Air,' people can lessen that risk to their health."

There are a number of actions residents can take to help reduce ozone. For example, they can carpool, ride the bus or TRAX, postpone errands that can wait or combine errands into one trip, limit a car's idling time, telecommute, walk or ride a bike, conserve energy, keep solvents and paints in airtight containers, fill the gas tank in the evening, avoid the use of gasoline-powered engines and use a non-charcoal barbecue. More ideas are available on the "Clean Air Utah" Web site at [www.cleanair.utah.gov](http://www.cleanair.utah.gov).

For current air quality conditions, residents can check the Web site at [www.deq.state.ut.us/EQAMC/amc.htm](http://www.deq.state.ut.us/EQAMC/amc.htm) for near real-time conditions or call the Air Pollution Hotline at 975-4009 or (800) 228-5434, where conditions are updated twice a day - once in the morning and again in the afternoon.

---

## **Public Health Advisory: Drought Causing Low Flows, Less Dilution in Streams and Rivers**

July 19, 2002

Contact:

William Moellmer, Division of Water Quality, (801) 538-6329

The Division of Water Quality is advising the public to refrain from recreational activities, such as swimming and tubing, in or on the water where treated sewage discharges are located. Due to the drought, many of our streams and rivers are experiencing low to zero flow. As a result, streams that receive municipal treated sewage effluent have considerably less dilution than is normal and, in some cases, the flows may be nearly 100 percent effluent.

The following are locations where river flows are considerably less than normal and into which treated sewage is discharged:

- Bear River – Corinne
- Beer Creek – Salem, Payson
- Chalk Creek – Coalville
- Cub River – Richmond
- Dry Creek – Spanish Fork
- Duchesne River – Duchesne
- Eureka Creek – Eureka
- East Canyon Creek – Jeremy Ranch
- Little Bear River – Hyrum, Wellsville
- Malad River – Bear River City, Tremonton
- Pond System – Springville
- Price River – Wellington
- San Pitch River – Moroni
- San Rafael River Tributaries – Castle Dale, Ferron, Emery, Huntington, Orangeville
- Silver Creek – Park City

Shoal Creek – Enterprise  
Virgin River – St. George  
Other locations – check with your local wastewater service district

Although all treatment facilities are required to meet appropriate standards to protect public health, the lack of dilution water under these extreme drought conditions may cause the rivers and streams that receive these discharges to experience exceedences of water quality standards, which may raise the risk for water-borne illnesses.

For more information, contact William Moellmer, Division of Water Quality, at (801) 538-6329 or at [wmoellmer@utah.gov](mailto:wmoellmer@utah.gov).

---

## **Utah DEQ Manager Receives National Recognition for Improving the Environment and Public Health**

August 7, 2002

Contact:

Gayle Smith, (801) 538-6779

Gayle J. Smith, manager of permitting and compliance in the Utah Department of Environmental Quality's Division of Water Quality, has been awarded the prestigious 2002 Walter F. Snyder Award by the National Sanitation Foundation (NSF) International and the National Environmental Health Association for achievement in attaining a quality environment and improving public health.

For the past 31 years, Smith has improved public health by addressing drinking water needs in Utah and nationally. "My experiences in my professional life have taught me a very important lesson: to make a positive difference, you must have principles and perseverance in your cause; you don't necessarily need to be brilliant or possess impressive credentials," Smith said.

"My motivation has always been simply to make a significant yet positive difference and to leave my professional field better than I found it," he said.

Smith's dedicated service began in 1971 as an environmental engineer for the Utah Department of Health, Bureau of Water Quality. In 1978, he was promoted to director of the Bureau of Public Water Supplies, Division of Drinking Water. During the 1970s, Smith played a major role in securing the passage of Utah's Safe Drinking Water Act and obtaining primacy delegation for the federal Safe Drinking Water Act in Utah.

During the 1980s, Smith helped found the Rural Water Association of Utah and successfully rallied support for legislation to require certification of public water systems operators. Additionally, Smith led a group of drinking water administrators to explore how states could be adequately represented at the national level on issues critical to the drinking water industry. The outcome was the formation of the Association of State Drinking Water Administrators. He served as vice president and president during the association's formative years.

Also in the 1980s, EPA appointed Smith as chairman of its National Drinking Water Advisory Council. Smith focused his attention on sensible national drinking water rules that could be implemented by small water systems. On a national level, Smith orchestrated a public comment campaign on EPA's Lead/Copper Rule proposal, resulting in modification of the rule.

Smith has chaired the NSF International Joint Committee on Drinking Water Additives since 1991. As chair, he has helped develop the first standards for drinking water additives by using his skills as a negotiator and mediator to obtain consensus of manufacturers; federal, state and local regulatory officials; water utilities; trade associations; and other users. Smith is an active member of the NSF Council of Public Health Consultants.

In 1991, when the Utah Department of Environmental Quality was created, Smith was appointed as the director of the Utah Division of Drinking Water. He served in that capacity until 1993. He currently manages programs in the Utah Division of Water Quality to permit discharge of municipal and industrial wastewater to waters in the state.

"Gayle has always maintained not only a professional but also personal interest in drinking water and water quality," said Don Ostler, director of the Utah Division of Water Quality. "This interest is evident in his continuing to serve NSF International on his own time since he left the Drinking Water Division."

Smith earned a bachelor's degree in civil engineering in 1967 and completed coursework for a master's degree in environmental engineering, both at Utah State University. He lives in Salt Lake City and is a native of Idaho Falls, Idaho.

---

## **44% of Chemical Weapons Safely Destroyed**

August 22, 2002

Contacts:

Marty Gray, Manager, Chemical Demilitarization Program, (801) 538-6819  
Laura Vernon, DEQ Public Information Officer, (801) 536-4484

Aug. 22 marks the sixth anniversary of when chemical weapons began to be destroyed at the Tooele Chemical Demilitarization Facility in Tooele County. To date, Utah has regulated the safe destruction of 44 percent of the chemical weapons stockpiled at the Deseret Chemical Depot.

The first chemical munition, a GB rocket, was destroyed Aug. 22, 1996. Now, all GB agent, including M-55 rockets and weteye bombs, has been destroyed. In 1996, Utah was storing 43 percent of the nation's stockpile of chemical weapons. Currently, Utah has only 25 percent of the nation's stockpile. The Army will soon initiate the campaign to destroy stockpiled VX agent.

As the stockpile is destroyed, the associated health risks decrease.

"Utahns are safer now than they were six years ago," Gov. Mike Leavitt said. "The disposal of the chemical weapons stockpile is a great example of how regulators can work collaboratively to solve environmental problems in a safe, efficient and responsible manner."

The Utah Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) has successfully permitted and provided oversight of the Army's operations to destroy the stockpiled chemical weapons. In addition, staff has provided support and assistance to other state regulatory programs as they proceed to permit incinerators or alternative technologies to destroy or neutralize their stockpiled chemical weapons.

"Our primary goal as a regulatory agency is to protect the environment and public health from exposure to contamination, and we have been successful at doing that since this program began," said Marty Gray, manager of the Chemical Demilitarization Program.

As part of Gov. Leavitt's 1,000-day plan, DEQ has implemented its own plan that improves environmental quality for all Utahns. The sixth-year anniversary of chemical weapons disposal operations comes on Day 200 of DEQ's plan and is just one of many milestones DEQ has achieved this year. Please see the attached list of DEQ milestones. The list is also available on the web at [www.deq.utah.gov](http://www.deq.utah.gov).

---

## **DEQ to Provide Environmental Information in Real Time**

August 29, 2002

Contact:

Brent Bradford, DEQ Deputy Director, (801) 536-4405

The Utah Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) has taken another important step forward in providing more efficient delivery of environmental services online. Through a \$338,944 information technology grant from EPA, DEQ will share environmental data with EPA and other partners over the Internet. The project will provide Utahns with meaningful, real-time access to information about the condition of the environment where they live and work.

The grant is part of EPA's National Environmental Information Exchange Network (NEIEN). DEQ has been heavily involved in the development of NEIEN and was one of the first five states to participate in the One-Stop Reporting Project. The One-Stop Reporting grant allowed DEQ to build a web-enabled warehouse of permit and compliance information for all regulated sites and facilities in Utah. It is accessible on the Web at [www.deq.utah.gov](http://www.deq.utah.gov).

With this new NEIEN grant, DEQ will be able to move into the next phase of development. Specifically, the grant will be used to:

Establish a centralized database that stores information as well as exchanges it with EPA via the Internet.

Create an automated single point of entry so that data is uniform and standardized.

Implement an automated quality assurance process at the time data is entered to ensure accuracy and reliability of the data.

"This project is significant because once the data is entered into the database, it is automatically assured for accuracy and becomes available immediately online for anyone to review at anytime," said Brent Bradford, deputy director of DEQ. "It gives us a more accurate picture of our environment, simplifies the way we do business and makes this information available in real time."

In 2000, DEQ established the Environmental Information Management Initiative (EIMI) in response to Gov. Leavitt's e-government initiative to make state government more efficient and accessible online. Under EIMI, DEQ's business process is enhanced and simplified using information technology. The NEIEN grant is an important step forward in DEQ's goal to build an integrated, seamless process that provides simple access to accurate information 24/7/365 via the Internet. DEQ expects to complete the project by June 2003.

As part of Gov. Leavitt's 1,000-day plan, DEQ continues to implement and track improvements in environmental quality for all Utahns. The information technology grant is just one of many milestones DEQ has achieved this year. A list of milestones is available on the Web at [www.deq.utah.gov](http://www.deq.utah.gov).

---

## **Utah Celebrates National Pollution Prevention Week September 16 - 22, 2002**

September 16, 2002

Contact:

Sonja Wallace, Pollution Prevention Coordinator, (801) 536-4477

(Salt Lake City) - Sept. 16 marks the start of National Pollution Prevention Week, an event that celebrates and promotes the benefits of pollution prevention. In Utah, the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) is celebrating the week by offering a free pollution prevention poster to the first 15 people who submit a pollution prevention tip that they plan on using during the week. Their tips will be posted on DEQ's Web site for others to try. To submit a tip, send an e-mail to [abrannan@utah.gov](mailto:abrannan@utah.gov).

Also, to give people a few ideas to try, DEQ has designed a calendar that features a pollution prevention tip for each day in September, October and November. These simple tips help keep our environment clean and healthy and build habits that also save time and money. The calendar can be accessed on the Web at [www.deq.utah.gov](http://www.deq.utah.gov).

"Pollution Prevention Week is all about doing what we can do to prevent pollution. It's more than just recycling. It's preventing the waste from being created in the first place," said Sonja Wallace, DEQ's pollution prevention coordinator.

The theme for Pollution Prevention Week is "Begin Now." By beginning now, people can make a difference in preventing pollution at home, at work, at school and on vacation. Here are a few tips for saving money and helping the environment at the same time.

### At Home

- Buy energy-efficient appliances

- Do not let water run when it's not actively in use for showering, shaving or brushing teeth

- Buy products that are recycled, recyclable, reliable, repairable, refillable and reusable

- Read labels on household products; buy the least toxic products available or use non-harmful substitutes

## At Work

- Pack a lunch and eat in, or walk to lunch
- Make two-sided copies
- Reuse envelopes and file folders
- Use scrap paper for faxes or draft copies

## At School

- Reuse lunch containers
- Walk to school or ride the bus or your bike
- Cut down on your paper use by writing on both sides, then recycling
- Avoid paper plates and plastic silverware at lunchtime

## On Vacation

- Give your car a tune up and check tire pressure before leaving
- Take photos with a regular camera rather than a disposable one
- Vacation close to home
- Reuse hotel linens

For more information on preventing pollution, visit the pollution prevention Web site at [www.deq.utah.gov](http://www.deq.utah.gov). For information on pollution prevention projects, contact DEQ's pollution prevention coordinator, Sonja Wallace, at (801) 536-4477.

---

## Summer Ozone Season Ends

September 30, 2002

Contact:

Bob Dalley, Manager, Air Monitoring Center, (801) 887-0760

Sept. 30 marks the end of the ninth season of the Utah Department of Environmental Quality's (DEQ) voluntary no-drive day program to reduce ozone. During the summer ozone season, DEQ called a record 15 voluntary no-drive days in late June and July when Utah was experiencing record-breaking heat. Ozone is an invisible gas formed from vehicle emissions in the presence of heat and sunlight. DEQ called voluntary no-drive days when pollution levels were expected to increase to unhealthful levels.

Division of Air Quality (DAQ) Director Rick Sprott said it was a challenging summer. "Record high temperatures accelerated ozone formation, and we did exceed the health standards a few times. However, it could have potentially been much worse. It wasn't because of the wise choices people made. We thank the public for making the difference," Sprott said.

According to Sprott, summer ozone levels are lower now than they were a few years ago. Several factors have helped reduce ozone.

DEQ this summer launched a new campaign called "Choose Clean Air." It provided a variety of actions people could take to reduce ozone and lessen health impacts. The campaign drew extensive media attention and garnered the Utah Medical Association's annual Environmental Award, which was presented to DEQ on Sept. 20.

Three years ago, local refineries voluntarily reduced the volatility of gasoline, which cuts down on ozone-producing fumes.

Cleaner cars and new standards to reduce volatile hazardous air pollutants have helped reduce ozone.

DAQ Planning Manager Cheryl Heying said the next four years are critical. "New standards for cars, light trucks and sport utility vehicles beginning in 2004 and the introduction of low sulfur fuel by 2006 should reduce ozone pollution significantly. However, it will take several years for cleaner vehicles and fuels to make an impact. We still need the public's help," Heying said.

Although the season has ended, DEQ continues to urge residents along the Wasatch Front to minimize human causes of ozone. Driving less, carpooling, using cleaner alternative fuels like natural gas and riding mass transit can help keep pollution levels down.

The summer ozone season runs from June 1 to Sept. 30 each year. Ozone is a major health and environmental concern in Utah's urban counties during the summer. Continued exposure to ozone can cause breathing problems, reduce lung function, irritate eyes and nasal passages and reduce resistance to colds and other infections.

"Our goal is to never exceed a health standard and to minimize ozone levels as much as possible since any exposure to ozone can be harmful, especially to children and the elderly," Sprott said.

For more information on how you can reduce or prevent air pollution, please visit the "Clean Air Utah" Web site at [www.cleanair.utah.gov](http://www.cleanair.utah.gov). For the latest pollution update, call the Air Pollution Hotline at 975-4009 in Salt Lake and Davis counties or (800) 228-5434 in Utah and Weber counties, or visit the "Clean Air Utah" Web site.

---

## Utah Celebrates 30 Years of Clean Water

October 3, 2002

### Contacts:

#### Clean Water Month:

Shelly Quick, Environmental Scientist, Division of Water Quality, (801) 538-6146

#### Statewide Water Quality Issues:

Don Ostler, Director, Division of Water Quality, (801) 538-6146

(Salt Lake City, UT) - Utah is taking part in a national celebration to commemorate the 30th anniversary of the federal Clean Water Act. Gov. Mike Leavitt has signed a declaration establishing October 2002 as "Clean Water Month" and 2002 as the "Year of Clean Water." The celebration marks a milestone in the efforts to protect the nation's and Utah's water resources.

During the month of October, the Utah Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) is joining with volunteers, citizen groups, schools and other agencies to participate in a National Water Monitoring Day. Also, a group from Provo High School has been invited by America's Clean Water Foundation to represent Utah at the Youth Watershed Summit in Maryland.

"The Clean Water Act is the single most important piece of federal legislation that has stopped raw sewage and industrial discharges to lakes and streams and has required discharge permits," said Shelly Quick, environmental scientist in the Utah Division of Water Quality. "In Utah, more than 1,100 permits to control pollution discharges have been issued, and water quality has been maintained and improved in spite of substantial population growth."

The U.S. Congress enacted the federal Clean Water Act in 1972. The Act calls for measures to not only prevent water pollution but also to clean up water that has already been polluted. In 1953, the Utah Legislature enacted one of the first water quality laws in the nation - the Utah Water Pollution Control Act. This Act created a Water Quality Board to address pollution problems, established water quality standards, allowed for classification of waters according to uses and required treatment of waste discharges from municipalities and industries.

"Utah was a pioneer in recognizing the need to protect and preserve the state's water resources. It was one of the first states to achieve secondary treatment of sewage in every community," said Don Ostler, director of the Utah Division of Water Quality.

During the past 30 years, Utah has achieved a number of milestones that have greatly contributed to better water quality for all Utahns. For example,

Utah is now able to monitor 75 percent of our 16,000 miles of streams and 95 percent of our lakes based on acreage.

Permitting programs are now in place to protect surface and ground water. There are 1,134 surface water permits and 119 ground water permits to control pollution discharges.

Plans have been completed to restore one-third of Utah's impaired waters.

More than 700,000 Utah households are now connected to modern sewer systems served by treatment plants that meet pollution standards.

\$443 million of federal and state monies have been provided to help Utah communities build wastewater treatment facilities.

Clean Water Month also promotes individual responsibility, encouraging all citizens to take care of and protect water resources for current and future generations. DEQ applauds the good efforts of citizens and environmental groups that are working to mitigate damage to streams and lakes.

"What each of us does on a daily basis affects water quality. Therefore, we are all part of the solution by preventing water pollution. It can be as simple as keeping trash out of our water bodies, planting drought-tolerant plants and becoming a water conservationist," Quick said.

A copy of the clean water declaration signed by Gov. Leavitt is available on the DEQ Web site at [www.deq.utah.gov](http://www.deq.utah.gov).

---

## **Students Discover Health of Provo River**

October 11, 2002

Contacts:

Laura Vernon, DEQ Public Information Officer, (801) 536-4484  
Michelle Kramer, Provo School District Public Relations Assistant, (801) 372-3125

(Provo Canyon, Utah) - A Provo High School science teacher and his students embarked on an exciting four-month quest not knowing how it would all end. They spent their summer on the Provo River, collecting samples of the water from the Uintah Mountains all the way down to Utah Lake. They wanted to know one simple thing: Is the water quality of the Provo River good or bad?

What they discovered pleased them and concerned them. After collecting water samples at 30 sites along the river and analyzing the data, they concluded that the Provo River is generally in good shape, especially near Jordanelle Dam. However, as the river meanders to more populated areas, the quality of the water degrades somewhat.

"The cleanest water we had all summer was just below Jordanelle Dam," said science teacher Ty Robinson. "It was cool, clear and had good oxygen content. Not surprisingly, the dirtiest water was in Provo. But overall, the river is clean."

In addition, Robinson and his students confirmed that what goes down storm drains impacts the health of the river. Storm drains capture water flowing across streets and parking lots. As it flows, the water picks up trash, dirt, oil, animal waste, fertilizer and other things left behind by motor vehicles, people and animals. This polluted water, known as runoff, goes directly into our streams, lakes and rivers. Runoff pollution affects fish and other wildlife and can also contaminate drinking water supplies.

"We saw evidence of runoff pollution toward the end of the Provo River where the population base is located," Robinson said. "That part of the river receives water from storm drains."

Robinson and his students also learned that water conservation makes a difference. Unnecessary water use not only contributes to water shortages but also adds to the volume of wastewater that must be treated by sewage treatment plants. Conservation helps preserve the environment by decreasing pollution.

"The Provo River Watershed will retain its high quality and beauty if we improve our efforts to protect it," Robinson said.

Don Ostler, director of the Utah Division of Water Quality, echoes that sentiment. "In this time of substantial population growth, the only way we will have success is if we increase our knowledge of water pollution and commit to change personal habits."

Robinson said their project barely scratched the surface compared to what others are doing. So, why then go to all the effort? "The Provo River is our life blood," Robinson said. "The river is in good shape, but we need to take better care of it."

There's still more to be done. This project produced 20 spin-off projects that Robinson and his students can't wait to begin. "The Provo River has been the best teaching tool I've ever had, and my students are excited about doing more," he said.

To help with the Provo River project, Robinson recruited about seven high school students but said that as many as 50 people worked on some aspect of the project. They consulted water experts from the Central Water Conservancy District and Utah Division of Water Quality. In addition, Robinson was able to use the hydrogeology lab at Brigham Young University (BYU) to analyze their samples. The students also used an electron microscope at BYU to take pictures of diatoms, a unique form of algae.

"I'm really proud of what my students have done," Robinson said.

This past week, Robinson and four of his students attended the Youth Watershed Summit in Maryland where they presented their project. While there, they also participated in a watershed study of the Chesapeake Bay, visited the Smithsonian Environmental Research Center and the Baltimore National Aquarium and met with First Lady Laura Bush and EPA Administrator Christie Todd Whitman.

The Youth Watershed Summit was part of a national celebration to commemorate the 30th anniversary of the federal Clean Water Act. In Utah, Gov. Mike Leavitt has signed a declaration establishing October 2002 as "Clean Water Month" and 2002 as the "Year of Clean Water."

Information on the Youth Watershed Summit is available on the Smithsonian Environmental Research Center's Web site at [www.serc.si.edu](http://www.serc.si.edu) (opens in a new window). The Web site for America's Clean Water Foundation, a sponsor of the summit, is [www.acwf.org](http://www.acwf.org). For more information on the "Year of Clean Water," please visit [www.yearofcleanwater.org](http://www.yearofcleanwater.org) (opens in a new window).

If your school or community would like to participate in a similar project, please contact Shelly Quick at (801) 538-6516 for more information about the Utah Division of Water Quality's Adopt-a-Waterbody program.

---

## **Utahns to Participate in National Water Monitoring Day**

October 17, 2002

Contacts:

National Water Monitoring Day:

Shelly Quick, Utah Division of Water Quality, (801) 538-6516

Statewide Water Quality Issues:

Don Ostler, Utah Division of Water Quality, (801) 538-6146

Hundreds of Utah volunteers will participate in the first National Water Monitoring Day on Oct. 18 by sampling the water quality of streams, lakes and rivers throughout Utah. Their data will be entered into a national database and used to help draft summary comparisons reflecting changes in water quality over the last 30 years.

"The main purpose of the event is to take a snapshot view of streams, lakes and rivers throughout the United States," said Shelly Quick, environmental scientist and coordinator of this event for the Utah Division of Water Quality. "Never before has such an event been scheduled to occur on one day across the nation."

In Utah, several groups plan to conduct local testing at a number of sites throughout Utah. For specific information about sites in your area, please contact the following coordinators:

Cache Valley Watersheds (Logan River, Blacksmith Fork, Spring Creek, East Fork of the Little Bear): Coordinator Andree Walker, (435) 797-2580  
Southern Utah Watersheds (Upper Sevier, Virgin River, Kanab Creek, Escalante River, Boulder Creek, Paria River): Coordinator Kevin Heaton, (435) 676-1117  
Various Watersheds (Jordan River, Virgin River, Santa Clara River, San Juan River, Ojato Creek, Logan River, Provo River): Coordinator Kari Cutler, (801) 468-0699

"We hope this event will increase the public's awareness of their role in protecting and preserving the quality of Utah's waters," Quick said.

National Water Monitoring Day is part of a national celebration to commemorate the 30th anniversary of the federal Clean Water Act. It is a coordinated effort among representatives from America's Clean Water Foundation; the Utah Division of Water Quality; schools; and local environmental, youth and civic groups.

"One of the important lessons learned from the past 30 years is the need for grassroots participation in caring for the natural resources that benefit us locally," said Don Ostler, director of the Utah Division of Water Quality.

Utah's Gov. Mike Leavitt has signed a declaration establishing October 2002 as "Clean Water Month" and 2002 as the "Year of Clean Water."

Information on America's Clean Water Foundation is available on the Web at [www.acwf.org](http://www.acwf.org) (opens in a new window). For more information on the "Year of Clean Water," please visit [www.yearofcleanwater.org](http://www.yearofcleanwater.org) (opens in a new window).

---

## **"Clean Air Utah" Web Site Receives Recognition**

November 8, 2002

Contacts:

Rick Sprott, Division of Air Quality Director, (801) 536-4000

Cheryl Heying, Division of Air Quality Planning Manager, (801) 536-4015

The "Clean Air Utah" interactive Web site ([www.cleanair.utah.gov](http://www.cleanair.utah.gov)) received a Golden Spike Award from the Utah chapters of the International Association of Business Communicators and Public Relations Society of America. The Utah Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) launched the informational Web site in June as part of the "Choose Clean Air" program in an effort to reduce air pollution.

"The response to the Web site has been beyond anything we ever expected," said Rick Sprott, director of the Division of Air Quality. "Utahns have greatly benefited from the Web site, and now other states are using it as a model. To be recognized for its value is an honor."

"Clean Air Utah" Web site won second place in its category "interactive communications." Golden Spike Awards are given annually to recognize excellence and best practices in communications and public relations in Utah. A judging panel of industry peers in Honolulu, Pittsburgh, Tulsa and Vancouver selected this year's winning entries.

A unique feature of "Clean Air Utah" is a simple, online survey that allows people to select clean air activities that fit into their lifestyle and to develop their own plan of action based on their choices. It also teaches people about air pollution and how it impacts their health.

"We had heard that people were tuning out our air message because they couldn't get out of their cars and they thought that was the only thing that would make a difference," said community relations coordinator Renette Anderson. "Our goal was to give people a range of options that would make a difference without causing a major disruption in their lives. We're hearing that people liked the concept and are finding it easier to implement than they originally thought."

DEQ originally developed the Web site in conjunction with the summer ozone season. Now DEQ has expanded the site to include information on pollution trapped in the valleys during winter inversions and the "Red Light, Green Light" wood-burn program.

---

## DEQ Supports Health Department Air Quality Proposal

November 22, 2002

Contacts:

Rick Sprott, Air Quality Division Director, (801) 536-4000  
Grant Koford, Bear River Health Department Environmental Health Scientist,  
(435) 792-6575

(Salt Lake City, Utah) - The Department of Environmental Quality supports the Bear River Board of Health's proactive efforts to reduce air pollution in Cache Valley and protect the health of residents. The Health Board is proposing to implement a mandatory "Red Light, Green Light" wood-burn program for Cache Valley similar to the one in effect along the Wasatch Front.

The new proposal would prohibit the use of wood-burning stoves, fireplaces and other sources of unclean combustion on days when air pollution is on the rise. The Bear River Board of Health will hold a public hearing on Wednesday, Dec. 4 at 5 p.m. at the Bear River Health Department, 655 E. 1300 North, Logan, to gather comments on the proposal.

"We are encouraged that the Bear River Board of Health has voluntarily taken action to protect the environment and the health of Cache Valley residents from the effects of air pollution," said Rick Sprott, Air Quality Division Director. "The Health Department has shown extraordinary leadership to address this concern as quickly and as proactively as possible."

The Bear River Health Department began a voluntary wood-burn program in 2001 to curb air pollution. For the past two years, Cache Valley has exceeded federal air quality standards for fine particulate matter known as PM 2.5. Particulate matter is dust or soot that results from burning. When inhaled, these fine particles can become lodged deep in lung tissue, causing breathing problems and aggravating respiratory diseases such as asthma.

During a prolonged wintertime inversion, PM 2.5 is even more of a concern. Pollution becomes trapped in the valleys and builds to concentrations that are particularly troublesome for the elderly, children and asthmatics. If pollution continues to build, the general public is at risk of experiencing breathing difficulties due to poor air quality.

"Clean air is vital to our quality of life and requires that residents proactively do what they can to keep the air they breathe as clean as possible," Sprott said.

For example, residents are asked to follow the wood-burn conditions in their area and to drive as little as possible during red and yellow days, because cars contribute significantly to air pollution. Carpooling and riding mass transit are excellent alternatives.

"We encourage people to choose clean-air activities that fit into their lifestyle, because their individual actions really do make a collective difference in keeping our air clean," Sprott said.

Residents in both Cache Valley and along the Wasatch Front are encouraged to visit the award-winning "Clean Air Utah" Website at [www.cleanair.utah.gov](http://www.cleanair.utah.gov) for more information about current air quality conditions, pollutants, health impacts and actions they can take to reduce air pollution.

A unique feature of "Clean Air Utah" is a simple, online survey that allows people to select clean-air activities that fit into their lifestyle and to develop their own plan of action based on their choices.

Residents can also find out current air quality conditions by calling the Air Pollution Hotline at 975-4009 for Salt Lake and Davis counties and (800) 228-5434 elsewhere. In addition, pollution conditions are announced daily by newspapers, television and radio stations.

---

## **Utah Well Prepared to Comply With New Federal Animal Waste Rules**

December 19, 2002

Contacts:

Don Ostler, Director, Water Quality Division, (801) 538-6146

Cary Peterson, Commissioner, Department of Agriculture and Food, (801) 538-7103

(Salt Lake City, Utah) - Utah livestock producers are well prepared to comply with new rules enacted by EPA Monday to control water pollution from animal feeding operations.

"Early indications are that this new rule will not disrupt continuation of Utah's innovative strategy to effectively address manure management from our animal feeding operations," said Dianne Nielson, executive director of the Utah Department of Environmental Quality.

Utah has had some localized water pollution due to manure runoff from animal feeding operations. However, Utah initiated an innovative and highly effective strategy, which has become a national model, 18 months ago to improve manure management. The

strategy involves pooling resources from several state and federal agencies and livestock producer groups to inventory over 3,000 operations and to help those with problems eliminate polluted runoff.

"This is a tremendous number of operations for a state to assess in a short period of time, and it is only possible due to a unique partnership between agencies and the agriculture industry," said Don Ostler, director of the Utah Division of Water Quality.

This cooperative partnership is based on Governor Leavitt's Enlibra principles, which recognize the need to meet national standards with flexibility and locally driven solutions. As a result of the strategy, Utah livestock producers are far ahead of the game in complying with EPA's new rule. In addition, the Utah strategy has helped shape the new federal rules.

"Our Utah livestock producers have been exemplary in leading these changes nationally," said Utah Commissioner of Agriculture and Food Cary Peterson. "Our goal is to reduce water pollution while sustaining a viable livestock industry. We are well positioned to do this."

The largest operations have all been permitted, and small- and medium-sized operations are being given assistance and a short period of time to voluntarily eliminate runoff problems and thus avoid the need to obtain a permit. By spring 2003, over 2,000 operations will have been inventoried and assessed.

Permits require that manure runoff and discharges be controlled and that manure applied to the land is done in a manner to avoid water pollution. The number of operations requiring permits to control runoff will increase nationwide from about 4,500 to approximately 15,500. According to EPA, the rule allows flexibility and relies heavily on education, technical assistance, incentives and USDA funding.

The 2001 Utah Legislature authorized the state's first manure management grants. Administered by the Utah Department of Agriculture and Food, the grants are for owners of animal feeding operations to make improvements required by EPA and USDA to be in compliance with new water quality regulations.

The state appropriation of \$340,000 was combined with \$125,000 from the USDA, Natural Resource Conservation Service to help implement the state's animal feeding operation strategy. A total of 40 projects have been undertaken in the past 18 months using these and other funds.