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**NEWS RELEASE**

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## Warm Spring Kick Starts Ozone Season

Salt Lake City, Utah – A warm spring has prompted the Utah Division of Air Quality (DAQ) to kick start its ozone alert program by calling a “yellow” action day today in parts around the state.

“We are seeing moderately high pollution levels, which is a reminder that everyone needs to be mindful that summer pollution has arrived,” said Bryce Bird, director of DAQ.

Typically, the summer ozone alert program begins in June and runs through Sept. 30 when the recipe of hot temperatures mixed with vehicle and industrial emissions cook up ozone – smoggy conditions that pose a health risk.

Scientists at the Air Monitoring Center are alerting residents in Salt Lake, Davis, Weber, Utah, Box Elder, Tooele and Washington counties to prevent pollution from building by limiting driving, avoid idling or mowing the lawn in the middle of the day.

A three-day forecast is available at [airquality.utah.gov](http://airquality.utah.gov). “Green” means conditions are good and people are encouraged to make clean air choices to keep pollution levels low. “Yellow” means the pollution is building and people are encouraged to take proactive steps. “Red” means pollution levels are critically high and potentially unhealthy.

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) recently applauded Utah for its compliance with federal standards for ozone after three years of monitoring showed levels below 75 parts per billion during eight-hour average on a given day.

Even so, prolonged exposure to ozone can cause respiratory illness or lung damage and is important that everyone do their part to reduce pollution, said Bo Call, manager of the Air Monitoring Center.

Utahns are encouraged to visit [ucair.utah.gov](http://ucair.utah.gov) and pledge to do something to improve air quality.

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