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NEWS RELEASE

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DEQ Continues To Clamp Down On Ozone, But Needs Your Help

EPA Designates Areas of Utah ‘Marginal’ Compliance for Ozone Pollution

Salt Lake City, Utah – Today, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) informed the Utah Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) that the Wasatch Front and parts of the Uinta Basin narrowly missed compliance with the 8-hour standard for ozone pollution. The EPA designated these areas as ‘Marginal’ Nonattainment areas under the Clean Air Act—the least stringent classification.

Areas along the Wasatch Front affected by the new designation include all or parts of Salt Lake, Davis, Weber, Tooele, and Utah counties. Areas affected in the Uinta Basin include parts of Uintah and Duchesne counties below an elevation of 6,250 feet.

"In a way, this is our written warning," said Bryce Bird, director of DEQ's Division of Air Quality (DAQ). "When the standard for ozone was lowered from 75 parts-per billion (ppb) to 70 ppb in 2015, we understood that the change would have an impact on Northern Utah and the Uinta Basin. We've spent that last two years working to meet the stricter standard."

[Ozone](#) is formed when vehicle emissions and industrial sources mix with sunlight and heat. Ozone pollution becomes more troublesome on hot summer days and can make it difficult for people to breathe. Prolonged exposure can also lead to lung damage.

EPA calculates ozone compliance on a three-year average of the fourth highest monitored eight-hour average. The fourth highest monitored eight-hour average along the Wasatch Front was 74 ppb at Bountiful in 2014, 82 ppb at Bountiful in 2015, and 76 ppb at Bountiful in 2016. Ozone pollution is highly affected by meteorological conditions that vary from year to year.

Under the Marginal Nonattainment designation, Utah is not required to submit a formal State Implementation Plan (SIP) to EPA, which is required under Moderate and Serious Nonattainment designations. Utah, however, is required to meet the standard of 70 ppb within the next three years.

During the past year, Utah's Air Quality Board acted on 14 rules limiting Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs) —one of the precursors to ozone formation. Additionally, Tier 3 fuels will start being produced and sold in Utah, which will significantly reduce the amount of NOx in

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Utah's air—the other precursor to ozone formation. These changes are just some of the steps being taken to address ozone pollution across the state.

DEQ continues to encourage the public to follow air quality forecasts at air.utah.gov and take measures to improve the air and reduce the impacts to human health. For more information on tips, visit UCAIR.org.

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About DEQ

Established in 1991, the Utah Department of Environmental Quality's (DEQ) mission is to safeguard and improve Utah's air, land and water through balanced regulation. DEQ implements state and federal environmental laws and works with individuals, community groups and businesses to protect the quality of Utah's air, land and water. For more information, visit www.deq.utah.gov, follow DEQ on Facebook ([utahdeq](https://www.facebook.com/utahdeq)) and Twitter ([UtahDEQ](https://twitter.com/UtahDEQ)), or call 1-800-458-0145.