

10 Simple Steps to Improve Air Quality

1. Take mass transit, share a ride or carpool.

The average driver spends about 64 cents per mile to drive their personal vehicle, including ownership and maintenance. By opting to take public transit or carpooling just once a week, you'll save money and reduce traffic congestion and air pollution.

Fewer vehicles on the road mean fewer sources of Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs) and Nitrogen Oxides (NO_x). A reduction in these ozone-forming components may result in an overall improvement of the local air quality.

2. Trip chain more often.

Chances are, you're already trip-chaining by combining your errands into one trip. It helps you get things done and reduce traffic congestion and air pollution.

3. Ride your bike.

Transportation accounts for 29 percent of all air pollution nationwide; ride a bike or walk for short trips during morning hours when ozone levels are lower.

4. Take things in stride.

Walk or skate instead of driving! These modes of transportation are easy ways to get exercise and they're easy on the air.

5. Care for your car.

Regular maintenance, tune-ups, oil changes, and checking tire pressure can improve gas mileage, extend your car's life, and increase its resale value. It can also reduce traffic congestion by preventing breakdowns and lead to reduced emissions.

6. Get fuel when it's cool.

Refueling during cooler periods of the day (morning/evening) can prevent gas fumes from heating up and creating ozone. This is essential to practice on air alert days when high ozone levels may be present.



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7. Don't top off the tank.

Topping off your tank releases gas fumes into the air and cancels the benefits of the car's antipollution equipment. This practice is also dangerous because it can lead to spills, with gasoline either getting on your body, clothes, or on the ground. Stopping short of a full tank is safer and it reduces pollution.

8. Telecommute.

Work from home if possible. You'll save time and money while reducing emissions and traffic congestion.

9. Know before you go.

Be in the know about traffic in your area: tune into your local radio for traffic reports, watch local news, or map your route via smartphone application. Get traffic updates before you leave home and you won't get stuck in a traffic jam, preventing your car from running/idling longer than necessary.

10. Avoid the drive-through and go inside.

Idling your vehicle for more than 10 seconds uses more fuel and emits more CO₂ than turning off and restarting your engine. Every time you use a drive-thru window you waste gas, money, and emit air pollution by idling. Do your part! Next time you are at a fast-food restaurant, ATM, bank, or other location with a drive-thru, go inside instead.

Spread the word. If everyone took just a few of these simple, easy steps, it could make a big difference because ...

It all adds up to cleaner air!

For information about air quality call DEQ's Air Quality Division at (405) 702-4100.

