



Aging and Air Quality in the Pikes Peak Region

Exposure to air pollution can pose a significant risk to older adults, especially those with lung disease. Pollutants like particulate matter and ozone may aggravate lung diseases, including chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) and asthma, and may be responsible for serious health effects, including hospitalization or premature death.

If you or your loved one experience symptoms of COPD or asthma, consult a doctor and follow a management plan outlined by your health care provider. The key to management of these diseases is through preventive measures and reduced exposure to environmental hazards. Take steps to prevent, control and reduce the frequency of symptoms to allow you or your loved one to breathe easier.

What Is Ozone?

Ground-level ozone, also known as smog, is the pollutant of concern in the Pikes Peak Region. It is not emitted directly as a pollutant, but forms when sunlight powers a chemical reaction between volatile organic compounds and nitrogen oxides. Ozone levels are usually the highest in the summer, especially on sunny days with no wind. Because ozone comes from so many different sources and it takes time for the reaction to occur, the reacting compounds can spread over a large area and produce a regional problem.

You can reduce ozone pollution in a variety of ways, by limiting your vehicle use or taking public transit, using gas-powered equipment late in the day, and limiting outdoor recreation on high ozone days. You can find your local air quality levels at www.airnow.gov



Did You Know?

According to the World Health Organization, an estimated 4.2 million premature deaths globally are linked to ambient air pollution, mainly from heart disease, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, lung cancer, and acute respiratory infections in children.

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