

Thursday, August 21, 2008

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### [Orange Alert Today For Both Ozone and Particulates](#)

Wednesday, August 20th, 2008

Middle Tennessee is under an unusual air quality alert today-conditions are poor both in terms of ozone levels and the amount of particle pollution in the air.

Particle pollution can come directly from fires or dust kicked into the air, or it can form when gasses from vehicles and industrial sites react. Ground-level ozone is the result of pollutants such as car emissions being trapped near the surface of the earth by hot air.

Of the two, ozone is more common in the midstate. Both pose a health risk when inhaled. That's especially true for children, the elderly, and people with lung or heart problems.

Melissa Stevens directs the [Clean Air Partnership of Middle Tennessee](#). She says people can take simple steps on alert days to help reduce the amount of pollution.

**“Just even bringing your lunch on an air alert day is an excellent way to help. That keeps the drive time down during the peak hours of the day at lunchtime when the sun is hottest. Not going through the drive-through if you do go out for lunch or dinner that day. Parking, going inside-anything they can do to reduce their idling time is a big thing.”**

Ozone levels are at their highest between 2 and 7pm, so Stewart recommends avoiding errands or spending time outdoors in the afternoon or early evening. And on days like today when particles are an issue, Stewart says it's best not to do yard work or grill out.

Last year, there were only two days where both kinds of pollution reached orange-alert levels at the same time.

By Nina Cardona

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