



LET'S TAKE CARE OF OUR SUMMER AIR.  
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**For Immediate Release**

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## **Summer Ozone Season Comes to an End**

*Record summer temperatures prompted metro Denver residents, local governments and businesses to "chill" to help reduce ozone pollution.*

**Denver, Colo. (August 31, 2006)** – The Regional Air Quality Council (RAQC) is marking the end of another ozone season in which the Denver area maintained compliance with the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) ozone standards. Despite record-breaking temperatures and 49 Ozone Action Alerts issued by meteorologists from the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) this summer, the metro Denver area still maintains compliance with the eight-hour standard for ozone set by the EPA.

With 52 days over 90 degrees in June, July and August and an average temperature of 89 degrees, the weather was ripe for the formation of ground-level ozone, which is formed when emissions from everyday items combine with other pollutants and "cook" in the heat and sunlight. The highest ozone levels are usually recorded in the summer months when temperatures approach the high 80s and 90s and when the wind is stagnant. The 49 Ozone Action Alerts are the highest number of alerts called since the program began in 1999.

"Despite unusually high temperatures throughout the summer, the region maintained compliance with the federal standard," said Ken Lloyd, executive director of the RAQC.

"However, due to several days in which area monitors registered elevated levels, we have less cushion to maintain compliance next year because the ceiling has been lowered. However, we are still on track but need metro Denver residents and businesses to continue taking action to help reduce ozone pollution each summer."

In June, the RAQC launched the "Summer Chill" campaign which asked Front Range residents, local governments and businesses to "chill" on the hottest summer days and avoid the activities that can cause ground-level ozone pollution. More than 700 area residents signed a pledge to



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drive less and to save tasks such as refueling their vehicles and mowing their lawns until after 5 p.m. to help reduce ozone pollution.

In addition, the Colorado Air Quality Control Commission is considering further controls for oil and gas condensate tanks after determining that emissions from such were much higher this summer than originally projected. While the industry has already spent over \$10 million retrofitting the tanks with emission control equipment, the industry is rapidly expanding in the North Front Range. Emissions from these operations contribute to the region's ozone pollution.

While the metro Denver region is currently in compliance with the new, stricter ozone standard set by the EPA, the region has until the end of next summer to maintain compliance and receive an official attainment designation from the federal government.

For additional information, please visit [www.OzoneAware.org](http://www.OzoneAware.org) or the RAQC's Web site at [www.raqc.org](http://www.raqc.org) or call (303) 629-5450.

**About Regional Air Quality Council**

The Regional Air Quality Council (RAQC) is the lead air quality planning agency for the seven-county Denver metropolitan area. In existence since 1989, the Council's main purpose is to develop plans and programs to keep the region in compliance with federal air quality standards, with significant input from area citizens, business, and local governments. The RAQC also oversees the development and implementation of air quality outreach and education programs throughout the region.

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