

# What You Need to Know About Ozone and Your Health

## OZONE FORMS

...naturally in the Earth's upper atmosphere. Up high, it protects us from the sun's damaging ultraviolet rays. At ground level, ozone harms living things, damages vegetation, and reduces crop production.

**Ozone** affects our health when it is inhaled. Even at low concentrations, ozone can cause respiratory problems. It aggravates asthma in children and stresses people with respiratory diseases. Healthy adults who are working or exercising outside can be affected. Long-term exposure to ozone may lead to premature aging of the lungs and chronic respiratory illness.

*Sedgwick County is precariously close to exceeding safe ozone levels. You can minimize your contribution to ozone levels when you:*

- Drive less. Instead, use mass transit, carpool, bike or walk.
- Tune up your vehicle and properly inflate your tires to maximize fuel economy.
- Refuel after 6 p.m. and don't top off your gas tank. Stop at the click. This reduces vapor loss.
- Mow your lawn after 6 p.m. and use a no-spill gas can.
- Better yet, use an electric or push lawn mower.
- Minimize the use of gasoline-powered yard machines (chain saws, edgers, blowers).
- Avoid lighter fluid when barbecuing. Use a charcoal chimney or electric starter to light your coals.
- Become more energy efficient. Use compact fluorescent light bulbs and turn the air conditioner up a few degrees.

The City of Wichita measures the ozone level in our air. Current ozone readings for Sedgwick County can be found at:

[www.wichita.gov/368/Air-Quality](http://www.wichita.gov/368/Air-Quality)



*Sedgwick County...  
working for you*

[www.sedgwickcounty.org](http://www.sedgwickcounty.org)