

## What is Smog?

- ☁ Toxic hazy brownish yellow air that can be seen hanging over the city on hot summer days.
- ☁ A mixture of ground-level toxic gases and airborne particulate matter that can damage health and the environment.
- ☁ Comes from burning of fossil fuels such as oil, gas, diesel, and coal.

## Sources of Smog:

The chemicals that form smog come from many sources, including:

- ☁ Cars, trucks, buses, and lawnmowers,
- ☁ Factories and industrial processes,
- ☁ Oil based paints, cleaners, and other solvents,
- ☁ Pesticides and herbicides,
- ☁ Road paving and other construction activities.



## Smog Advisories:

The Ontario Ministry of the Environment monitors the air and provides a rating of the air quality of a particular day, called the Air Quality Index (AQI). If the Ministry predicts that the AQI will rise to 50 or above within the next 24 hours, it issues a Smog Advisory.

## City Actions:

When a Smog Advisory has been issued, the City of Hamilton activates its Smog Response Plan. Under the plan, the City informs staff that a Smog Advisory has been issued, and provides information on how to protect health and improve air quality during this period. This plan also outlines operational procedures for City staff to follow during a smog advisory. For example, staff are advised to:

- ☁ Postpone, where possible, activities that use gas powered equipment,
- ☁ Restrict vehicle re-fuelling during the day,
- ☁ Delay use of discretionary vehicles,
- ☁ Reduce the use of oil-based paints, solvents, and cleaners.

## Smog Harms our Health:

- ☁ It has been estimated that more than 1,900 people in Ontario die prematurely each year from the effects of air pollution.
- ☁ Approximately 9,800 people in Ontario are admitted to hospitals annually and 13,000 visit emergency rooms as a result of exposure to smog.
- ☁ Smog worsens heat problems, asthma, bronchitis, and other lung problems.
- ☁ It reduces lung function in healthy people and causes eye, nose, and throat irritations.

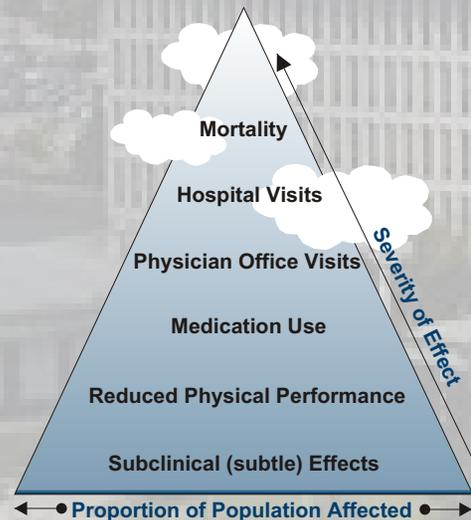
## Protect Your Health:

There are several things that you can do to avoid being affected by smog exposure:

- ☁ Avoid physical exertion and try to stay indoors in a cool place.
- ☁ If you can't avoid being outside, try to schedule your activities for early in the morning when pollution levels are lower.
- ☁ Avoid the sun and high traffic areas, and drink lots of water to stay hydrated.

## Who are Most Affected:

- ☁ Young children
- ☁ Pregnant women
- ☁ The elderly
- ☁ Asthmatics
- ☁ People with heart problems
- ☁ Smokers
- ☁ People who work or exercise outdoors



## Spare the Air Actions:

You too can help reduce smog levels and make our air cleaner. These actions will help air quality on any day, but especially on Smog Advisory days.

- ☁ Car pool, walk, bike, or take the bus to work.
- ☁ Adjust your air conditioners to a warmer temperature.
- ☁ Do not use oil-based paints or other cleaners.
- ☁ Do not mow your lawn or use liquid barbeque starters.
- ☁ Wait until the evening when its cooler to fill your car's gas tank.
- ☁ Save electricity at home by turning down the air conditioner and turning off lights that you aren't using.
- ☁ Keep your vehicle well tuned, check you tire pressure, and drive at moderate speeds.
- ☁ Limit your trips by doing all your errands at once and don't let your engine idle.

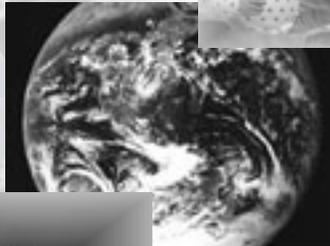
## Where Can I Find More Information?

Website: [www.airquality.hamilton.on.ca](http://www.airquality.hamilton.on.ca)  
Email: [haqic@hamilton.ca](mailto:haqic@hamilton.ca)  
Phone: 905-643-1262 x 250

**The Ontario Ministry of the Environment Air Quality Site**  
Features up-to-date information on Smog Advisories and the Air Quality Index  
Website: [www.airqualityontario.com](http://www.airqualityontario.com)



Hamilton



# SMOG

## Fast Facts About Smog And How You Can Help

