



## Climate Change:

Our Health in the Balance

Michigan's Public Health Week  
April 14 - April 22, 2008

## Air Pollution and Respiratory Health

*There is a direct connection between climate change and the health of our nation today. Children, the elderly, the poor, and people with chronic health conditions are most at risk for negative health impacts of climate change. Climate change can increase the amount of ozone in the air. Air pollution, including ozone, can trigger events related to respiratory diseases, such as asthma, bronchitis, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), and emphysema.*

### What You Should Know

- Ground-level ozone, sometimes referred to as “smog,” is created when a mixture of air pollutants “bake” in the hot, summer sun. Typically, ozone levels are highest in Michigan during May through September.
- The elderly and children are the most affected by air pollution. About one-third of people with asthma in Michigan are children.
- Asthma affects more than 20 million Americans, almost a million in the state of Michigan.
- Asthma causes \$18 billion per year in direct and indirect healthcare costs, and more than 14 million missed school and work days.

### LOCAL RESOURCES AVAILABLE

Michigan Department of Environmental Quality

[www.michigan.gov/deq](http://www.michigan.gov/deq)  
<http://www.deqmiar.org/notify.cfm>

American Lung Association of Michigan

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

Michigan Environmental Council

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

Asthma Initiative of Michigan

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

## What You Can Do

- Keep an eye on your health, and the health of your family.
- If you or someone you know has asthma or another respiratory disease, learn to recognize what triggers those attacks.
- Make your indoor environment “lung healthy”
  - Keep your home smoke-free
  - Vacuum regularly, use a HEPA filter if possible
  - Dust with a damp cloth weekly
  - Put your mattress, box spring and pillow in allergen-proof airtight, or plastic covers
- Fix water leaks which cause mold growth
- Stay “lung healthy” in Michigan’s outdoor environment
  - Keep track of air pollution levels by visiting <http://www.deqmiair.org>
  - Carpool, bus, walk or bicycle to work to save fuel
  - Fill up your car’s gas tank in the evening to cut air pollution
  - Keep your car maintained to manufacturer’s specifications and proper tire pressure to increase fuel efficiency
  - Postpone mowing your lawn on high ozone days to cut air pollution
  - Mow your lawn less often to cut air pollution
- See the resources listed in the Local Resources Available section to get involved and learn more!



### Partners in Planning

- ✧ Michigan Department of Community Health ✧ Michigan Association for Local Public Health ✧
- ✧ Michigan Environmental Council ✧ Michigan Public Health Association ✧
- ✧ Michigan Public Health Institute ✧ Michigan State University ✧
- ✧ University of Michigan School of Public Health ✧

