



STATE OF NEW YORK
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

ELIOT SPITZER, Governor - Astrid C. Glynn, Acting Commissioner

NEWS

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STATE DOT ACTING COMMISSIONER GLYNN KICKS OFF CLEAN AIR NY Air Quality Program To Be Launched At Earth Day Festival

New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) Acting Commissioner Astrid C. Glynn today announced Clean Air NY, a year 'round program that seeks to improve air quality in the New York metropolitan area by educating residents and organizations about simple ways they can change their travel behavior. The Clean Air NY program, which will be featured at Earth Week 2007 at Grand Central Terminal in New York City, expands upon an ongoing effort to notify the public when ozone levels may be high.

“Earth Day – April 22 – is a perfect time for individuals to get involved in helping to keep our air clean,” Acting Commissioner Glynn said. “Clean Air NY is a dynamic program that suggests simple changes travelers can make in their daily routines to improve air quality for themselves and their neighbors.”

NYSDOT will host a Clean Air NY booth at the indoor Earth Fair festival at Grand Central Station in New York City on April 14 and 15 and at the outdoor Earth Fair festival at Grand Central Station on April 20 and 21. The booth is part of Earth Week 2007 festivities, which will bring the public together with environmentalists, youth, green companies, and musical performers to celebrate Earth Day in New York City. The event is free and open to the public.

Visitors will learn about the every-day choices they can make to change their travel routines and improve our air quality, such as combining errands; biking, walking or using public transit; carpooling; keeping vehicles properly maintained; and reducing vehicle idling time. Visitors to the booth will receive informational materials and specialty items and will be encouraged to join Clean Air NY and begin taking steps to improve the air.

NYSDOT partners with the State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) on a program, formerly known as “Ozone Action Days,” that provides air quality forecasts and information about transportation actions the public can take to reduce emissions on unhealthy air quality days. Clean Air NY expands upon that effort, broadening public outreach and notifications to businesses and transportation providers throughout the lower Hudson Valley, Long Island, and the five boroughs of New York City. In keeping with DEC’s air quality forecasts, the NYSDOT program now includes notifications regarding fine particulate matter, as well as ozone, and goes from a summer-time focus to a year 'round effort.

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State Department of Environmental Conservation Commissioner Pete Grannis said, "DEC, our partners at DOT, and other participating organizations recognize the importance of increasing awareness of the ways New Yorkers can enhance our air quality through everyday actions. The information provided as part of the Clean Air NY initiative includes common-sense approaches that will improve the health of our families and communities."

Ozone, a major seasonal component of smog, is created by sunlight reacting with chemicals found in gasoline vapors and emissions from vehicles and industrial smoke stacks. Too much ozone in the air can make breathing difficult and painful, sometimes causing shortness of breath, coughing and wheezing, chest pain, and throat and eye irritation, especially for people with asthma and other respiratory conditions.

Fine particulate matter – airborne particles of less than 2.5 microns in diameter – present potential health concerns because they can be breathed into the deepest parts of the lungs. Scientific studies have indicated a connection between fine particulate matter and respiratory problems, such as asthma and bronchitis. The elderly and young children are most susceptible to particulates. Particulate matter also contributes to haze.

Information about Clean Air NY is available on the program Web site at CleanAirNY.org. The Web site is filled with local information and resources to help New Yorkers make smarter travel choices that will improve the air they breathe, their health, and their quality of life. Highlights on the Web site include:

- Information for Individuals—simple steps all New Yorkers can take to improve air quality by making everyday changes to their travel routine;
- Information for Organizations—steps on helping employees make smarter choices that will have a positive impact on air quality;
- Commuting information—help with alternate commuting choices for organizations and individuals, such as locating a carpool or vanpool, or help for organizations to develop corporate commuting policies;
- Air Quality Action Day Bulletins—information on poor air quality days and what people can do to improve the air on those days; and
- Media Center—general media information, frequently asked questions, and downloadable materials, such as a logo, press releases, and information on how to join Clean Air NY.

Clean Air NY is the result of a collaboration of individuals and organizations dedicated to improving air quality in the metro New York area. Clean Air NY is sponsored by the New York State Department of Transportation in support of region-wide air-quality efforts.

Becoming a part of Clean Air NY is free and easy. Simply visit the Web site at CleanAirNY.org, stop by the Clean Air NY booth during the Earth Fair, or call 1-877-ILUVAIR (1-877-458-8247).

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