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PRESS RELEASE

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Summer Ozone Season Begins May 1

Winchester-Frederick County residents encouraged to take simple steps to help reduce ozone-causing emissions

Winchester, VA—Blue skies and clean air are Valley hallmarks—together, we can keep it that way!

From May 1 through October 31, Valley AIRNow is again encouraging Winchester-Frederick County residents, local governments, and businesses to take voluntary action to reduce ozone pollution in the area. These small steps will be particularly important on Air Quality Action Days—when meteorologists from the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality expect weather conditions to lead to unhealthy concentrations of ground-level ozone for sensitive groups in the Winchester area.

Some activities that the community can do to reduce ground-level ozone include:

- Stop at the click—do not overfill gas tanks when refueling.
- Keep vehicles regularly maintained.
- Avoid unnecessary vehicle idling.
- Mow in the evening after 5:00 p.m.
- Refuel in the evening after 5:00 p.m.
- Avoid solvent-based products, which have pollution causing vapors—volatile organic compounds (VOCs). Use water-based paint, stain and sealants.

Ozone pollution is formed when emissions from everyday activities combine with other pollutants and “cook” in the heat and sunlight. Sources of such emissions include local industry, gasoline-powered vehicles and lawn equipment, and household paints, stains and solvents.

At ground level, ozone pollution can be unhealthy for sensitive groups like the young and elderly. Ozone can also trigger attacks and symptoms in individuals with pre-existing health conditions, such as asthma or other respiratory problems.

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