

Harris County
HCPHES
Public Health & Environmental Services

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HEALTH ADVISORY

For Immediate Release

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**Air Quality Warning/Health Advisory
Ozone Reaches *LEVEL RED***

Harris County Public Health & Environmental Services (HCPHES) is issuing an “**Air Quality Warning/Health Advisory**” for the Harris County area. **LEVEL RED** Ozone has been reached at the Pasadena and Deer Park monitoring sites and may be reached at additional sites in east Harris County. **LEVEL RED** ozone means that the ozone concentrations exceed 125 parts per billion (ppb). Ozone at this level may have harmful health effects.

LEVEL RED means that the air quality is considered “*Unhealthy*” for all groups. HCPHES recommends that people avoid prolonged outdoor exertion during **LEVEL RED** Ozone conditions. High ozone levels usually occur during daylight hours between 11:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. High ozone is usually short-lived and may impact various locations for a few hours.

At this level, active people of all ages are at higher risk of feeling harmful health effects. During physical activity, ozone penetrates deeper into the parts of the lungs that are more easily damaged. Individuals who have respiratory diseases may notice symptoms earlier and at lower ozone levels than less sensitive individuals.

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Health effects of high ozone may include coughing, throat irritation, an uncomfortable feeling in the chest, and/or difficulty breathing. Ozone adds to people feeling more sensitive to allergens, the most common trigger of asthma attacks. Ozone can also increase the risk of respiratory infections.

Current ozone levels throughout the Harris-Galveston-Brazoria County area can be viewed by visiting the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) website at: http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/cgi-bin/compliance/monops/select_curlev.pl?region12_cur.gif#map1

For additional information, log on to www.hcphe.org/eph/Ozone/home.htm or www.tceq.state.tx.us/nav/data/ozone_data.html.