



# Air Quality in Southwest Idaho

## Key Contacts and Web Links



### Key Contacts

Idaho Department of Environmental Quality, [www.deq.idaho.gov](http://www.deq.idaho.gov)

Air Quality Manager, Boise Regional Office: David Luft

208/373-0550, [david.luft@deq.idaho.gov](mailto:david.luft@deq.idaho.gov), 1445 N. Orchard, Boise, ID 83706

Airshed Coordinator, Boise Regional Office: Michael Toole

208/373-0550, [michael.toole@deq.idaho.gov](mailto:michael.toole@deq.idaho.gov), 1445 N. Orchard, Boise, ID 83706

Air Quality Board (Ada County only), [www.emissionstest.org/](http://www.emissionstest.org/)

Executive Director: David Zaremba

208/377-9191, [AQB@emissionstest.org](mailto:AQB@emissionstest.org), 41 S. Baltic Place, Ste 200, Meridian, ID 83642

### Web Links

Air Quality in Idaho

[www.deq.idaho.gov/air-quality.aspx](http://www.deq.idaho.gov/air-quality.aspx)

Air Quality in the Treasure Valley

[www.deq.idaho.gov/regional-offices-issues/boise/air-quality-plans-reports.aspx](http://www.deq.idaho.gov/regional-offices-issues/boise/air-quality-plans-reports.aspx)

Air Pollutants

Ozone: [www.deq.idaho.gov/air-quality/air-pollutants/criteria-pollutants/ozone.aspx](http://www.deq.idaho.gov/air-quality/air-pollutants/criteria-pollutants/ozone.aspx)

Particulates: [www.deq.idaho.gov/air-quality/air-pollutants/criteria-pollutants/particulate-matter.aspx](http://www.deq.idaho.gov/air-quality/air-pollutants/criteria-pollutants/particulate-matter.aspx)

Air Quality Reports and Forecasts

[www.deq.idaho.gov/air-quality/monitoring/daily-reports-and-forecasts.aspx](http://www.deq.idaho.gov/air-quality/monitoring/daily-reports-and-forecasts.aspx)

Real-Time Air Quality Monitoring

[airquality.deq.idaho.gov/](http://airquality.deq.idaho.gov/)

Air Quality and Burning

General: [www.deq.idaho.gov/air-quality/burning.aspx](http://www.deq.idaho.gov/air-quality/burning.aspx)

Residential: [www.deq.idaho.gov/air-quality/burning/residential-burning.aspx](http://www.deq.idaho.gov/air-quality/burning/residential-burning.aspx)

Clean Air Zone (Anti-Idling Campaign)

Citizens: [www.deq.idaho.gov/pollution-prevention/p2-for-citizens/clean-air-zone-program.aspx](http://www.deq.idaho.gov/pollution-prevention/p2-for-citizens/clean-air-zone-program.aspx)

Schools: [www.deq.idaho.gov/pollution-prevention/p2-for-schools/clean-air-zone-program.aspx](http://www.deq.idaho.gov/pollution-prevention/p2-for-schools/clean-air-zone-program.aspx)

Businesses: [www.deq.idaho.gov/pollution-prevention/p2-for-businesses/clean-air-zone-program.aspx](http://www.deq.idaho.gov/pollution-prevention/p2-for-businesses/clean-air-zone-program.aspx)

Vehicle Emissions and Emissions Testing

Vehicle Emissions: [www.deq.idaho.gov/air-quality/air-pollutants/vehicle-emissions.aspx](http://www.deq.idaho.gov/air-quality/air-pollutants/vehicle-emissions.aspx)

Emissions Testing in Northern Ada County: [www.emissionstest.org/](http://www.emissionstest.org/)

Emissions Testing in Canyon County and Kuna:

[www.deq.idaho.gov/regional-offices-issues/boise/vehicle-emissions-testing.aspx](http://www.deq.idaho.gov/regional-offices-issues/boise/vehicle-emissions-testing.aspx)

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



# Air Quality Standards

[www.deq.idaho.gov/air-quality/monitoring/attainment-v-nonattainment.aspx](http://www.deq.idaho.gov/air-quality/monitoring/attainment-v-nonattainment.aspx)



## What are the “air quality standards”?

To protect our health and the quality of the air we breathe, the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) sets limits on the amounts of certain pollutants that can safely be in our air. These limits are called the National Ambient Air Quality Standards. When areas exceed these standards, they must take steps to lower pollutant levels. Of the six pollutants for which “standards” have been established, three are of particular interest in the Treasure Valley: carbon monoxide, ozone, and particulate matter (fine and coarse). The standard for each pollutant is periodically reviewed by the EPA, and may be updated based on that review. Visit [www.epa.gov/air/criteria.html](http://www.epa.gov/air/criteria.html) to find the current standards.

## Do “exceeding” and “violating” the air quality standards mean the same thing?

While “exceeding” and “violating” the air quality standards may sound like the same thing, they actually have very different meanings.

An “exceedance” of the standards happens when an air quality monitor records pollutant levels above the standard for any one day. This indicates our air is unhealthy to breath, but does not mean we have broken the law.

A “violation” of an air quality standard happens when an area exceeds the standard for multiple days in a given time period—generally over multiple years. The number of exceedances necessary to be considered a violation of the standard varies by pollutant. See [www.epa.gov/air/criteria.html](http://www.epa.gov/air/criteria.html) for details. When an area “violates” a standard, then it has broken the law, or violated the Clean Air Act.

## What happens if we don’t meet those standards? How does that relate to “nonattainment”?

There are two answers to this question: a health answer and a legal answer.

From a health standpoint, not meeting the standards means our air is unhealthy to breath, especially for the young, old, and people with preexisting health conditions.

From a legal standpoint, if we violate the standard, we have broken the law, and the area becomes designated as a “nonattainment area.” If an area is designated as “nonattainment” the Department of Environmental Quality must develop and implement plans to bring the area back into compliance with the air quality standard.

Those plans must show how the area will curb air pollution. They can be costly and time consuming to develop, but even more importantly, they can result in new rules for businesses and potentially local ordinances that can affect everyone. New rules for businesses can potentially have an economic impact on an area, as they may call for limiting production of existing businesses and/or limit new businesses. Each nonattainment area is declared for a specific pollutant, so an area may have a different attainment “status” for different pollutants. Nonattainment areas for different pollutants may overlap each other or they may share common boundaries.

## What is the air quality status of the Treasure Valley?

In the past, northern Ada County has violated the air quality standards for carbon monoxide and coarse particulate matter (PM<sub>10</sub>). Due to those violations, northern Ada County was classified a “nonattainment area” for those two pollutants. No other portions of the Treasure Valley have been designated as nonattainment for any air quality pollutant.

Northern Ada County is now classified as a “maintenance area,” for carbon monoxide and PM<sub>10</sub>, meaning that it was once “nonattainment,” but is now meeting the air quality standards for those pollutants. Plans, called “maintenance plans,” are in place that show how northern Ada County will continue to maintain its compliance with the carbon monoxide and PM<sub>10</sub> air quality standards.

Ozone and fine particulate matter (PM<sub>2.5</sub>) are the primary pollutants of concern today. While the Treasure Valley has exceeded the standards for these two pollutants on multiple occasions, the area has not violated these standards, and thus continues to be in compliance (attain) the air quality standards for ozone and PM<sub>2.5</sub>.



# What is an Airshed?



[www.deq.idaho.gov/regional-offices-issues/boise/air-quality-plans-reports.aspx](http://www.deq.idaho.gov/regional-offices-issues/boise/air-quality-plans-reports.aspx)

## What is an airshed?

Simply put, an airshed is any area that “shares” the same air. In overly simplistic terms, an airplane can be thought of as its own airshed—the air circulates inside, but is relatively isolated from the surrounding air. Air in an airshed is generally separated from air in a neighboring airshed by topography (e.g., mountains) and/or weather patterns. On days when air pollution is easily visible the concept and boundaries of an airshed are perhaps easiest to understand, as the area where the pollution is visibly trapped often aligns with the boundaries of the airshed. Air pollution that is emitted in one area of an airshed will spread out and become distributed across the airshed. For this reason, air pollution levels are generally similar across a given airshed.

However, the boundaries of an airshed can be difficult to determine due to changing conditions. While ridges and mountains that restrict the circulation of air are easily identified, weather conditions that restrict the circulation of air can change on a daily basis. Features that obstruct the movement of air on some days may represent no barrier at all when a weather front pushes through.

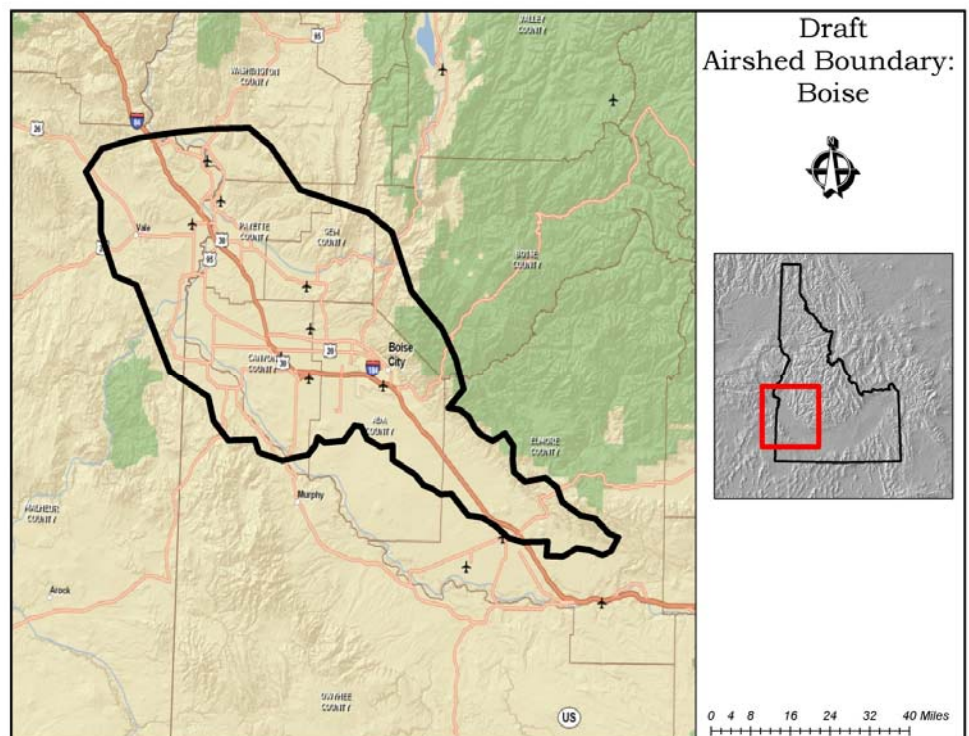
Under normal circumstances, air near the ground heats up during the day. Hot air is lighter, causing it to rise. Cooler air rushes in to take its place near the ground. This constant circulation mixes polluted air with cleaner air, and helps flush out pollution. When air is calm or stagnant, pollution tends to stay near the same area that it is emitted, allowing concentrations to build up. The boundaries of local airsheds are based on time periods when air is least able to mix, and air pollution levels are expected to be highest.

## Where is the Treasure Valley airshed?

Generally speaking, the Treasure Valley airshed follows the Interstate 84 corridor from Elmore County, northwest through Ada and Canyon Counties, and into Malheur County, Oregon, including portions of other surrounding counties.

## Why does the airshed matter?

Air pollution emitted in one part of an airshed will disperse across the entire airshed, meaning that all sources of pollution in an airshed—as well as all efforts to control it—will impact the entire area. This, in turn, impacts decisions made regarding regulating industries that emit air pollution, vehicle emissions testing, and more.





# Ozone

[www.deq.idaho.gov/air-quality/air-pollutants/criteria-pollutants/ozone.aspx](http://www.deq.idaho.gov/air-quality/air-pollutants/criteria-pollutants/ozone.aspx)



## What is ozone?

Ozone is an odorless, colorless gas that forms in the atmosphere when three atoms of oxygen are combined.

I've heard that we have too much ozone *and* that we don't have enough. How is that possible?

Ozone occurs in two layers of the atmosphere. In one place in the atmosphere—the stratosphere—ozone is beneficial; in the other—the troposphere—it is harmful, leading to two very different ozone issues.

The layer surrounding the earth's surface is the troposphere. Human actions can cause localized increases in the "ground-level" ozone in this layer. This ozone is considered an air pollutant; it damages human health, vegetation, and many common materials. It is a key ingredient of urban smog. When ozone is discussed by the Department of Environmental Quality or the Air Quality Board, or when an air quality alert is issued for ozone, ground-level ozone is the issue of concern.

Above the troposphere is the stratosphere. Ozone in the stratosphere is beneficial and protects the earth from the sun's harmful ultraviolet rays, but it is being depleted. When the "hole in the ozone layer" is discussed, it is the ozone in the stratosphere that is the issue. While important, this is not the issue related to local air quality alerts.

## What causes ozone?

Ozone is not emitted directly into the air, but is created through a chemical reaction between oxides of nitrogen (NO<sub>x</sub>), and volatile organic compounds (VOCs) in the presence of strong sunlight. Idaho's hot, sunny summers provide the ideal setting for the formation of ozone. Emissions from motor vehicle exhaust, industrial facilities, gasoline vapors, and chemical solvents are some of the major sources of NO<sub>x</sub> and VOCs. Because strong sunlight is necessary for ozone to be created, it is generally only an issue in the summer.

## Why is ground-level ozone a problem? What are the health impacts?

Ground-level ozone can be dangerous to your health. Breathing ozone causes chest pain, coughing, throat irritation, and congestion; more significantly, it damages lung tissue and reduces lung function. It can also worsen bronchitis, emphysema, and asthma. Breathing ozone is bad for everyone, but it is most harmful to children, adults who are active outdoors, and people with respiratory diseases. Additionally, ozone is harmful to plants, including agricultural crops, and can reduce agricultural yields.

## How can individuals help?

Individuals can help keep ozone levels down by reducing the amounts of NO<sub>x</sub> and VOCs that we each put into the atmosphere. Driving less and properly maintaining our vehicles have the biggest impact.

- Carpool, use public transportation, bike, or walk whenever possible.
- Combine errands and reduce trips.
- Keep car, boat, and other engines tuned up according to manufacturers' specifications.
- If your check engine light is on, have your vehicle checked out by a qualified vehicle repair shop.
- Have your vehicle's emissions tested when required.
- Keep your tires properly inflated.
- Limit engine idling.
- Avoid topping off your tank. Be careful not to spill fuel and always tighten the gas cap securely.
- Use low-VOC or water-based paints whenever possible.
- Follow manufacturers' guidelines for use and storage of products made with solvents.



# Particulate Matter



[www.deq.idaho.gov/air-quality/air-pollutants/criteria-pollutants/particulate-matter.aspx](http://www.deq.idaho.gov/air-quality/air-pollutants/criteria-pollutants/particulate-matter.aspx)

## What is particulate matter?

Particulate matter is the term for small particles found in the air including dust, dirt, soot, smoke, and liquid droplets. Some particles are large or dark enough they can be seen with the naked eye; others are so small that they can only be detected with an electron microscope. Particles less than 10 micrometers in diameter ( $PM_{10}$ ) are referred to as “coarse” particulates; particles less than 2.5 micrometers in diameter are referred to as “fine” particulates ( $PM_{2.5}$ ). For comparison, the average human hair is 70 micrometers in diameter.

## What are the sources of particulate matter?

$PM_{10}$  is a “primary” pollutant, meaning it is emitted directly into the air. Sources of  $PM_{10}$  include cars, trucks, buses, factories, construction sites, tilled fields, unpaved roads, construction, wood stoves and fireplaces, agricultural burning, fires, and natural windblown dust.

$PM_{2.5}$  can be either a primary pollutant or a “secondary” pollutant, meaning it can be emitted into the air or formed through a chemical reaction when other pollutants combine.

Primary  $PM_{2.5}$  particles include airborne dust, soot, and smoke. Secondary  $PM_{2.5}$  forms as a result of chemical reactions among nitrogen oxides, sulfur dioxide, ammonia, and/or volatile organic compounds. The main sources of nitrogen oxides are vehicles and construction and farm equipment. Sources of ammonia emissions include waste from dairies and other animal operations.

## When is particulate matter an issue?

Impacts from particulate matter may occur at any time during the year, especially in the summer due to wildfires and blowing dust, and in the winter during inversion events, which trap vehicle exhaust and smoke from fireplaces and wood stoves.

A temperature inversion occurs when colder, heavier air settles into valleys and a layer of warm air settles on top. During an inversion, air is stagnant and does not mix. Pollution from wood stoves, vehicles, industry, and other sources becomes trapped in the cold air layer and builds until a strong weather system moves through and breaks up the inversion. Due to topography and weather patterns, Idaho is subject to some of the most severe wintertime inversions in the Intermountain West.

## Why is particulate matter a problem? What are the health impacts?

Due to their small size, particulates—especially extremely small  $PM_{2.5}$  particles—can be inhaled deep into the lungs and accumulate in the respiratory system. Exposure to particulate matter is associated with several serious health effects, including premature death. Adverse health effects have been associated with exposures to particulate matter over both short periods (such as one day) and longer periods (a year or more). Children, the elderly, and people with existing heart or lung diseases are particularly susceptible to the effects of exposure to particulate matter.

## How can individuals help?

Individuals can help keep particulate levels down by reducing the amounts of dust, soot, smoke, and chemicals that we each put into the air.

- Reduce or eliminate fireplace and wood stove use.
- Change out old wood stoves with newer EPA-approved clean burning wood stoves.
- Avoid using gas-powered lawn and garden equipment.
- Avoid burning leaves, trash, and other materials.
- Carpool, use public transportation, bike, or walk whenever possible.



# Air Quality Index

[www.deq.idaho.gov/air-quality/monitoring/daily-reports-and-forecasts.aspx](http://www.deq.idaho.gov/air-quality/monitoring/daily-reports-and-forecasts.aspx)



## What is the air quality index?

The air quality index (AQI) indicates how clean or polluted the air is in a particular area and identifies potential health impacts. The AQI focuses on health effects that can happen within a few hours or days after breathing polluted air. Each day, DEQ forecasts the AQI for the following day, based on forecasted weather conditions. Burn bans are based on these AQI forecasts. The AQI forecast and the previous day's actual AQI are available online at [www.deq.idaho.gov/air-quality/monitoring/daily-reports-and-forecasts.aspx](http://www.deq.idaho.gov/air-quality/monitoring/daily-reports-and-forecasts.aspx).

## What does the air quality index mean?

The AQI is divided into six colors, each corresponding to a different level of health concern.

**Good.** The AQI value is between 0 and 50. Air quality is considered satisfactory, and air pollution poses little or no risk.

**Moderate.** The AQI is between 51 and 100. Air quality is acceptable; however, there may be a moderate health concern for a very small number of people. For example, people who are unusually sensitive to ozone may experience respiratory symptoms.

**Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups.** The AQI is between 101 and 150. At this level, members of sensitive groups (those who are affected at lower levels of air pollution than the general public) may experience health effects. For example, people with lung disease are at greater risk from exposure to ozone, while people with either lung disease or heart disease are at greater risk from exposure to particle pollution. The general public is not likely to be affected when the AQI is in this range.

**Unhealthy.** The AQI is between 151 and 200. Everyone may begin to experience health effects when AQI values fall into this range. Members of sensitive groups may experience more serious health effects.

**Very Unhealthy.** The AQI is between 201 and 300. Everyone may experience more serious health effects.

**Hazardous.** The AQI is over 300. This triggers health warnings of emergency conditions. The entire population is likely to be affected.

Know Before You Go! Air Quality Index		
Category	Index Value	Level of Health Concerns
Green	0-50	Good
Yellow	51-100	Moderate
Orange	101-150	Unhealthy for sensitive groups
Red	151-200	Unhealthy
Purple	201-300	Very unhealthy
Maroon	301-500	Hazardous

## What should I do if the AQI is high?

There are two different types of action to take if the AQI is high or forecasted to be high— protect your health and protect the air.

### Protect your health

Ensure you are taking appropriate health precautions, based on the level of the AQI and your personal health conditions. For example, you may need to avoid exercising outdoors until conditions improve. Guidelines for schools and others who work with children can be found at [www.deq.idaho.gov/media/914034-children\\_and\\_air\\_quality.pdf](http://www.deq.idaho.gov/media/914034-children_and_air_quality.pdf).

### Protect the air

- Avoid using gas-powered lawn and garden equipment.
- Carpool or use public transportation whenever possible. Combine errands and reduce trips.
- Make sure your tires are properly inflated.
- Limit engine idling.
- Avoid topping off your tank. Be careful not to spill fuel and always tighten the gas cap securely.
- Comply with burn bans or other burning restrictions in your area. Visit [www.deq.idaho.gov/air-quality/monitoring/daily-reports-and-forecasts.aspx](http://www.deq.idaho.gov/air-quality/monitoring/daily-reports-and-forecasts.aspx) to learn if burning restrictions are in affect where you live.



# Frequently Asked Questions About Air Quality



[www.deq.idaho.gov/air-quality.aspx](http://www.deq.idaho.gov/air-quality.aspx)

## What are air pollutants?

An air pollutant is anything in the air that can cause harm to humans or the environment. Pollutants may be natural or human made and may be solid particles, liquid droplets, or gases. Natural sources of air pollution include smoke from wildfires, dust, and even volcanic ash. Human made sources of air pollution include emissions from vehicles and factories; dust from unpaved roads, agriculture, or construction sites; and smoke from human-caused fires.

## Why is air pollution an issue?

Breathing elevated levels of air pollutants can adversely affect human health, especially among sensitive populations such as children, the elderly, and those with heart or lung diseases. Potential health problems include lung damage, birth defects, nerve damage, reduced immunity, and an increased risk of developing cancer.

## What pollutants are of a concern for the Treasure Valley?

Today, the main pollutants of concern in the Treasure Valley are ground-level ozone and fine particulate matter (PM<sub>2.5</sub>). In the past, carbon monoxide and coarse particulate matter (PM<sub>10</sub>) were also of concern locally. More information on ozone and particulate matter is available on enclosed fact sheets. Additional information is also available online at [www.deq.idaho.gov/air-quality/air-pollutants/criteria-pollutants.aspx](http://www.deq.idaho.gov/air-quality/air-pollutants/criteria-pollutants.aspx).

## Who is "in charge" of air quality in the Treasure Valley?

The Idaho Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ, [www.deq.idaho.gov](http://www.deq.idaho.gov)) regulates air quality in Idaho, based on the federal Clean Air Act. DEQ's Boise Regional Office works specifically on air quality issues in southwest Idaho and oversees vehicle emissions testing in Kuna and Canyon County. The Air Quality Board ([www.emissionstest.org/](http://www.emissionstest.org/)) oversees emissions testing in the remainder of Ada County. See the "Contacts and Web Links" fact sheet for specific contact information.

## How does DEQ protect air quality?

The State of Idaho has developed rules to implement the federal Clean Air Act, and DEQ works with businesses, local governments, and individuals to ensure the rules are followed. DEQ's role includes issuing air quality permits and inspecting businesses that emit air pollution, regulating outdoor open burning, educating individuals about ways they can prevent air pollution, overseeing vehicle emissions testing in certain locations, and developing plans to bring an area into compliance (and later maintain compliance) with air quality standards when it has violated those standards.

## How does DEQ monitor air quality?

DEQ's collects real-time measurements of air pollutants at more than 20 sites throughout the state, including Treasure Valley locations in Boise, Meridian, and Nampa. Real-time monitoring data can be found at [airquality.deq.idaho.gov/](http://airquality.deq.idaho.gov/). DEQ operates air quality monitoring stations at six locations in the Treasure Valley.

## What is the Air Quality Index (AQI) and how does it work?

The AQI indicates how clean or polluted the air is in a particular area and identifies potential health impacts. The AQI focuses on health effects that can happen within a few hours or days after breathing polluted air. Each day, DEQ forecasts the AQI for the following day; the AQI forecast is available online at [www.deq.idaho.gov/air-quality/monitoring/daily-reports-and-forecasts.aspx](http://www.deq.idaho.gov/air-quality/monitoring/daily-reports-and-forecasts.aspx). More information is available on enclosed AQI fact sheet.

## Why is burning an issue?

Smoke contains small airborne particles that can become lodged in our lungs, making breathing difficult and leading to more serious short-term and chronic health problems for certain sensitive populations such as small children, pregnant women, older adults, and people with asthma or other respiratory ailments. Sensitivity to smoke depends on the level and duration of exposure, age, and individual susceptibility. Many items commonly found in household trash release toxic pollutants when burned. Some of these pollutants can cause cancer, birth defects, and eye and skin irritation. Due to health impacts, most items in household garbage are illegal to burn.



# Frequently Asked Questions About Air Quality



[www.deq.idaho.gov/air-quality.aspx](http://www.deq.idaho.gov/air-quality.aspx)

## What is a burn ban and how do I know if one is in effect?

When and where you can burn depends on many things, including weather conditions, where you live, and the type of burning you want to do. A burn ban—a voluntary or mandatory order that restricts outdoor burning and the use of wood stoves and fireplaces—may be issued when air quality is poor. Most burn bans in the Treasure Valley are regulated by local (city or county) ordinance, but are based on DEQ's AQI forecast.

- General information on burn restrictions and bans can be found at [www.deq.idaho.gov/air-quality/burning/burn-restrictions-and-bans.aspx](http://www.deq.idaho.gov/air-quality/burning/burn-restrictions-and-bans.aspx).
- Specific information on current burn restrictions and bans can be found at [www.deq.idaho.gov/air-quality/monitoring/daily-reports-and-forecasts.aspx](http://www.deq.idaho.gov/air-quality/monitoring/daily-reports-and-forecasts.aspx). The top of the page provides general information on current burning restrictions; the bottom of the page lists specific local ordinances.
- Information on what can and cannot be burned can be found at [www.deq.idaho.gov/air-quality/burning/residential-burning.aspx](http://www.deq.idaho.gov/air-quality/burning/residential-burning.aspx)

## What are the impacts of motor vehicle emissions?

Vehicle emissions are created from the incomplete combustion of gasoline or diesel. Other factors such as emission controls, engine design, and vehicle maintenance may affect vehicle emissions. Vehicles emit many pollutants into the air, including carbon monoxide, carbon dioxide, hydrocarbons, nitrogen oxides, sulfur oxides, and volatile organic compounds. These pollutants can also combine to form secondary pollutants such as fine particulate matter (PM<sub>2.5</sub>) and ozone. While emissions from an individual vehicle may be minimal compared to emissions from a factory or other business, emissions from many vehicles on the road at one time can have a serious impact on air quality. Additional information is available online at [www.deq.idaho.gov/air-quality/air-pollutants/vehicle-emissions.aspx](http://www.deq.idaho.gov/air-quality/air-pollutants/vehicle-emissions.aspx).

## What is vehicle emissions testing? Why do we do it?

Vehicle emissions testing is a program that checks motor vehicles to ensure pollution control devices on the vehicles are working. Vehicle emissions testing is required to help control air pollution in the Treasure Valley. Ada County has been testing emissions since 1984 due to violations of federal pollutant standard for carbon monoxide. The program in Canyon County and Kuna is required by Idaho Code and was established in 2010 to help curb the formation of ground-level ozone.

## When and where is vehicle emissions testing required?

Most vehicles registered in Ada and Canyon Counties must have their emissions tested every two years. Anyone may test their vehicle at any testing station in either county. There are approximately 50 testing stations in Ada County and 20 in Canyon County. Prices vary, but by law cannot exceed \$20 per test. Some vehicles are exempt from emissions testing. Visit [www.emissionstest.org/questions.aspx](http://www.emissionstest.org/questions.aspx) (Ada County) and [www.deq.idaho.gov/regional-offices-issues/boise/vehicle-emissions-testing.aspx](http://www.deq.idaho.gov/regional-offices-issues/boise/vehicle-emissions-testing.aspx) (Canyon County and Kuna) for information on exemptions.

## What happens if I don't have my vehicle tested?

Your vehicle registration will be revoked by the Idaho Transportation Department. Before you may legally drive the vehicle again, you must have it tested and it must pass the emissions test or be granted a waiver or extension. Once you have fulfilled the emissions testing requirement, your vehicle's registration will be automatically reinstated in one to three business days.

## Where can I learn more about vehicle emissions testing?

- Air Quality Board (Ada County, except for Kuna): [www.emissionstest.org/](http://www.emissionstest.org/)
- DEQ (Kuna and Canyon County): [www.deq.idaho.gov/regional-offices-issues/boise/vehicle-emissions-testing.aspx](http://www.deq.idaho.gov/regional-offices-issues/boise/vehicle-emissions-testing.aspx)



# Department of Environmental Quality/Air Quality Board

## Media Packet - Sample Photos



Visual inspection of emission control system  
(Larry's Chevron, Nampa)  
File name: 8\_Visual\_Inspection\_Canyon



Emissions OBD-II test  
(Mobile Testing Station, Kuna)  
File name: 3\_OBD\_Inspection\_Kuna



Obtaining an RPM reading  
(Taylor's Rapid Test, Meridian)  
File name: 7\_RPM\_Reading\_Ada



Emissions testing station, shed  
(Taylor's Rapid Test, Meridian)  
File name: 1\_Emissions\_Testing\_Station\_Shed\_Ada



Emissions testing station, van  
(Aires WSR LLC, Boise)  
File name: 11\_Ada\_Van\_WithCar



Ada County emissions testing station sign  
(Aires WSR LLC, Boise)  
File name: 9\_Ada\_Sign



DEQ air quality monitoring station  
(St. Luke's, Meridian)  
File name:  
15\_MonitoringDeck\_Meridian\_Monitoring\_Station



Fine particulate (PM<sub>2.5</sub>) monitor  
DEQ air quality monitoring station  
(St. Luke's, Meridian)  
File name: 13\_FineParticulateMonitor\_SASS\_Meridian  
January 2014

## Media Packet Photos - Photo Log, All Photos

File name	Description
1_Emissions_Testing_Station_Shed_Ada	Emissions testing: Emissions testing station, shed, Taylor's Rapid Test, Meridian
2_OBD_Inspection_Canyon	Emissions testing: Conducting an onboard diagnostics test, Larry's Chevron, Nampa
3_OBD_Inspection_Kuna	Emissions testing: Conducting an onboard diagnostics test (OBD), mobile testing station, Kuna
4_Probe_Tailpipe_Ada	Emissions testing: Emissions testing probe in tailpipe conducting "TSI" (two speed idle) test, Taylor's Rapid Test, Meridian
5_Probe_Tailpipe_Canyon	Emissions testing: Emissions testing probe in tailpipe conducting "TSI" (two speed idle) test, Larry's Chevron, Nampa
6_Probe_Tailpipe_Exhaust_Ada	Emissions testing: Emissions testing probe in tailpipe with vehicle exhaust, Taylor's Rapid Test, Meridian
7_RPM_Reading_Ada	Emissions testing: Inspector getting RPM (revolutions per minute) reading, Taylor's Rapid Test, Meridian
8_Visual_Inspection_Canyon	Emissions testing: Conducting a visual inspection, Larry's Chevron, Nampa
9_Ada_Sign	Emissions testing: Testing station sign, Ada County, Aires WSR LLC, Boise
10_Ada_Van_FrontSign	Emissions testing: Van testing station, Aires WSR LLC, Boise
11_Ada_Van_WithCar	Emissions testing: Van testing station with car, Aires WSR LLC, Boise
12_CoarseParticulateMonitor_Exterior_Meridian	Air quality monitoring: Coarse particulate monitor (PM <sub>10</sub> ), DEQ monitoring station, St. Luke's, Meridian
13_FineParticulateMonitor_SASS_Meridian	Air quality monitoring: Fine particulate (PM <sub>2.5</sub> ) speciation broad-range monitor, DEQ monitoring station, St. Luke's, Meridian
14_FineParticulateMonitor_URG_Meridian	Air quality monitoring: Fine particulate (PM <sub>2.5</sub> ) speciation black carbon monitor, DEQ monitoring station, St. Luke's, Meridian
15_MonitoringDeck_Meridian_Monitoring_Station	Air quality monitoring: Monitoring equipment on deck, DEQ monitoring station, St. Luke's, Meridian