

Do Your Share for Cleaner Air

*St. Louis Regional Clean Air Partnership
2008 in Review*

Executive Summary

Today, more than a decade since the launch of the St. Louis Regional Clean Air Partnership (The Partnership), almost 75 percent of the people living in the St. Louis region are familiar with air quality issues facing our metro area. The Partnership has played a key role in fostering that awareness and has been the driving force behind the region's voluntary clean air initiatives.

Formed in 1995 by the American Lung Association, St. Louis Regional Chamber and Growth Association, East-West Gateway Council of Governments, Washington University and others, The Partnership's mission is to increase awareness of regional air quality issues and to encourage activities to reduce air pollution. The Partnership accomplishes this through an aggressive outreach and communications program that is focused on disseminating the daily air quality forecasts and engaging the public in the regional clean air effort by educating area residents and businesses about various steps they can take on a daily basis to help keep our air clean.

On the heels of the Environmental Protection Agency's revision of the Ambient Air Quality Standard last spring, which resulted in tighter limits on ground-level ozone pollution and changes to the color-coded air quality index designed to trigger air quality alerts at lower pollution thresholds, The Partnership kicked off its 2008 air quality awareness campaign by stepping up its efforts to remind area residents to remain steadfast in their voluntary efforts to reduce emissions in light of the new EPA standards. Keying off of the green-living movement, which continues to sweep the nation, The Partnership worked to engage the public in the clean air effort by demonstrating how "green" efforts such as carpooling, using mass transit, recycling and turning off appliances and lights that aren't in use can positively affect air quality.

At the end of 2008, 1,300+ area businesses, organizations, schools, hospitals and government agencies were working directly with The Partnership or its lead partners, doing their part to voluntarily reduce emissions.

The designated Clean Air Coordinator (CAC) or Employee Transportation Coordinator (ETC) at these worksites continued to play an important role in the Air Quality Forecast alert system.

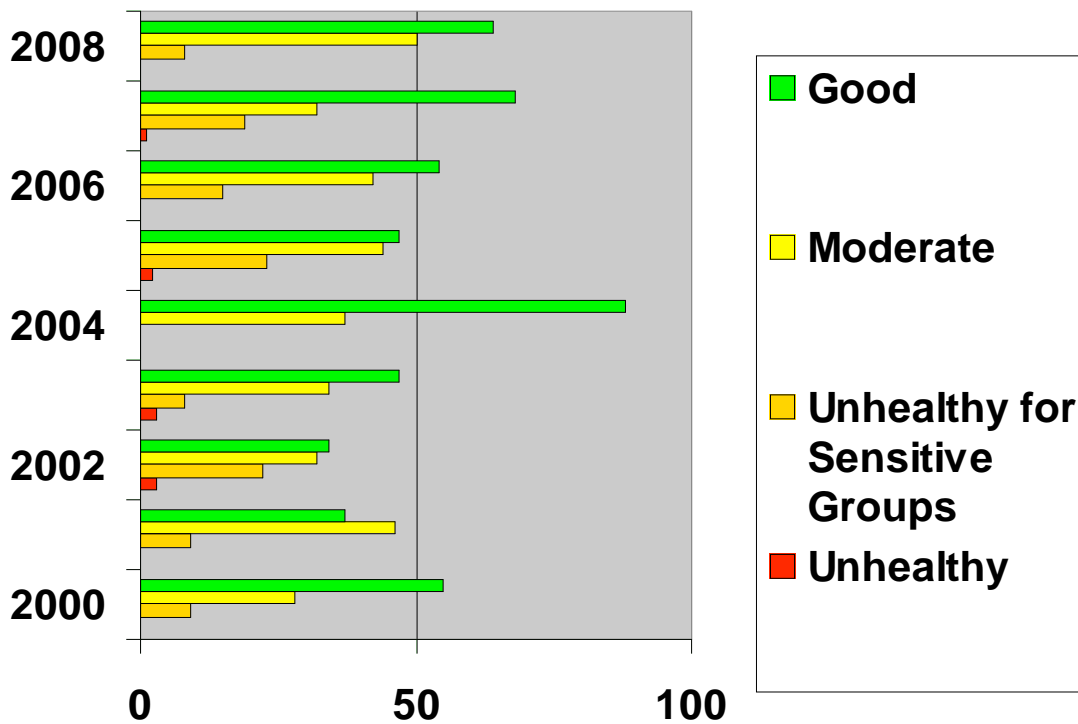
Each day, the American Lung Association, which handles the day-to-day activities for The Partnership, provides these contacts with the day's air quality forecast. The CAC or participating ETC then spreads the word to fellow employees and customers and reminds them to consider taking actions to reduce emissions to protect their health and the health of others in the community.

Lead partners such as MoDOT, Metro, RideFinders, Madison County Transit and Citizens for Modern Transit, also play a vital role in encouraging behaviors that reduce automobile emissions in the St. Louis community.

The following pages summarize the key highlights and initiatives of the 2008 Air Quality Season, and provide an overview of the important role the St. Louis Regional Clean Air Partnership continues to play in improving our region's air quality.

2008 Air Quality Forecast Tally

A cooler and wetter-than-normal summer contributed to healthier air quality conditions in the St. Louis area during the 2008 Air Quality Forecasting Season. Through September 19, the 2008 season saw no unhealthy or “red” days (compared to one in 2007) and just eight “orange” days - a decrease of approximately 50 percent compared with 2007. The St. Louis region also enjoyed an impressive 64 good or “green” air quality days, and 50 moderate or “yellow” air quality days. While weather patterns play a major role in determining our air quality from year-to-year, it’s important to remember that we can’t rely on the hope of good weather alone to keep our air quality in healthy ranges. Even when the weather gives us a reprieve from poor air quality, our region must continue to work together to reduce emissions – the contributing factor to ozone pollution over which we do have some control.



The chart above is a comparative analysis of the number of green, yellow, orange and red air quality days during the 2000-2008 air quality seasons based on the Air Quality Index measurements. The information is invalidated.

2008 Highlights

a. *Updated tagline – Go Green: Do Your Share for Cleaner Air*

With the green movement continue to sweep the nation during 2008, the Clean Air Partnership updated its tagline, prompting area residents to Go Green: Do Your Share for Cleaner Air. The updated theme was designed to demonstrate how “green” efforts such as carpooling, using mass transit, recycling and turning off appliances that aren’t in use can positively affect air quality. The modified theme was incorporated into all of The Partnership’s marketing materials and ads during the 2008 season and will be continued in 2009.

b. *Kick-off Event*

On May 20, approximately 1,000 downtown St. Louis employees gathered at Kiener Plaza to help The Partnership kick off the start of air quality forecasting for 2008. As in years past, the event served as another excellent opportunity for The Partnership to provide downtown employees with a wealth of information on the negative health effects of poor air quality and the steps they can take to clear the air. Attendees were once again treated to live music and complimentary Ted Drewes frozen custard as they visited 18 informational booths manned by Partnership members and supporters. Radio station KHITS 96 FM on hand with a clean air quiz and prizes. Partnership organizations represented with booths at this year’s event included:

- American Lung Association of the Central States
- Amtrak
- Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America – St. Louis Chapter
- Citizens for Modern Transit
- Earthways Center
- Enterprise Rent-a-Car
- Local Harvest Grocery
- Madison County Transit
- Metro
- Missouri Department of Natural Resources
- Missouri Department of Transportation
- Recreational Equipment, Inc. (REI)
- RideFinders
- St. Louis Regional Clean Air Partnership
- St. Louis Regional Clean Cities Program
- SuiteCommute
- Trailnet
- Toyota Motor Company
- U.S. Green Building Council

c. *Clayton Clean Air Festival*

The Partnership also continued its outreach to residents in the Clayton area during 2008 with another Clean Air Festival in downtown Clayton in late June. The special stand-alone event provided Clayton employees with convenient access to free information on how to go green and do their share to help keep the region's air quality in healthy ranges. Like the annual events in Kiener Plaza, the 2008 Clayton event featured live music, free Ted Drewes frozen custard and 17 booths featuring information on carpooling opportunities, mass transit, the health effects of air pollution and tips for reducing energy use at home.

Partnership organizations represented with booths at the Clayton event were:

- The American Lung Association of the Central States
- Amtrak
- Citizens for Modern Transit
- Earthways Center
- The Environmental Protection Agency
- Madison County Transit
- Metro
- The Missouri Department of Natural Resources
- The Missouri Department of Transportation
- Recreational Equipment, Inc. (REI)
- RideFinders
- The St. Louis County Air Pollution Control Program
- The St. Louis Regional Clean Air Partnership
- Trailnet
- The U.S. Green Building Council

d. *St. Louis Business Journal "Heroes of the Planet" award*

In October, The Partnership was thrilled to learn that it and three of its member organizations had been selected as finalists for the St. Louis Business Journal's inaugural "Heroes of the Planet" award. The Partnership, Alberici, RideFinders and the St. Louis Chapter of the U.S. Green Building Council were all honored at a special awards ceremony at the Missouri Botanical Garden, and each was featured in a special section in the Business Journal which profiled all of the 2008 "Heroes of the Planet" finalists and awards winners.

e. *Green holiday PR push*

Drawing on The Partnership's "Go Green: Do Your Share for Cleaner Air" theme, to extend its messaging later into the year, we worked to educate the public on ways to minimize their environmental impact during the holiday season and, in turn, help improve the region's air quality. Keying off statistics indicating that Americans create more trash each year between Thanksgiving and the New Year than any other time of the year, The Partnership issued a press release which offered tips for reducing waste during the season. These included utilizing reusable bags, baskets or recyclable paper to wrap gifts; purchasing a live tree and replanting it after the holidays and using reusable glassware, flatware and dishware rather than plastic, paper or Styrofoam items.

The press release was well-received by local media outlets, helping to generate appearances by The Partnership on two mid-morning shows on KMOV and KSDK-TV, as well as several print placements and radio interviews.

f. *Outreach to university parking services representatives.*

In the spring, members of The Partnership met with representatives from Washington University and the Washington University School of Medicine's parking services departments to discuss ways the groups could collaborate to inform students, faculty and staff about the air quality benefits of transit use. As a result, The Partnership teamed up with both groups to develop a customized piece that the parking services departments could distribute to those who receive transit passes and parking permits through the university. The piece was two-sided, with the front side highlighting stats demonstrating the benefits of transit use for the region's air quality. The back side targeted those unable to use transit and offered tips on how to drive

more sensibly to reduce the amount of emissions released into the air. The piece went out to 20,000 students and staff members at Washington University and an additional 5,000 students and staff members from the university's School of Medicine.

Washington University also worked with The Partnership to distribute a list serve notice inviting students and staff to visit www.cleanair-stlouis.com to sign-up for the daily air quality forecast.

In the fall, The Partnership also met with parking services representatives from St. Louis University, the University of Missouri - St. Louis and Southern Illinois University Edwardsville to discuss ways the groups could collaborate with The Partnership. Discussions will continue with these groups in 2009 with the goal of working with each of them on a variety of targeted initiatives during the year.

g. *New and Continued Partnerships*

During the 2008 season, The Partnership again added to the list of hundreds of area businesses and organizations that are working to spread its clean air message. New, continued or expanded partnerships for 2008 included the following:

In May, **Franklin County** schools, the **Rockwood School District** and **St. Francis Cabrini Academy**, **St. Joan of Arch Catholic School**, **St. Stephen Protomartyr Catholic School** and **St. John the Baptist Catholic Elementary School** followed in the footsteps of the **Belleville, Festus, Granite City, Parkway and University City School Districts** by distributing a letter and flyer with tips for reducing emissions to their K-8th Grade Students during the year. Combined, the schools distributed more than 23,000 flyers to their students prior to the end of the school year.

The contributions of these entities are helping The Partnership in its goal of increasing awareness of regional clean air issues and encouraging participation in activities to reduce emissions.

h. *2008 Air Quality Awareness Survey*

In the fall of 2008, the American Lung Association once again commissioned an independent research firm to conduct a survey of public awareness of regional air quality issues. Carried out via interviews of residents from eight counties in the Bi-state area, the survey asked for individuals' opinions on a variety of air quality- related topics, including awareness of poor air quality days, knowledge and sources of air quality information and methods of improving air quality. This year's survey demonstrated a seven percent increase in the number of respondents who indicated that poor air quality was a "very or moderately" serious problem for the area. In addition, more than 73 percent of those surveyed noted that they were "very or somewhat" familiar with daily air quality information, a slight increase since 2007. Over half of respondents also noted that they are "always or usually" aware when a red or orange day is declared in the area.

According to the survey, familiarity of actions designed to improve the region's air quality increased overall in 2008. Feedback from respondents indicated that familiarity with the terms "carpooling/ride sharing" and "using mass transit" was at its highest level in 10 years, coming in at 85.8 percent and 81.7 percent, respectively. Familiarity levels with terms such as "flex time" and "trip planning" also increased significantly, reaching 59 percent and 69 percent, respectively.

The survey also demonstrated continued increased awareness of actions designed to improve the region's air quality. Actions such as carpooling to work, riding the bus or MetroLink and bringing lunch to work instead of driving all increased slightly, while the number of those who stated they would perform routine maintenance on their vehicles and not use charcoal lighting fluid when barbecuing to help improve air quality jumped over eight percent and six percent, respectively. New options to make the home more energy-efficient and to work from home/telecommute were also added to the survey this year, and more than 90 percent of respondents stated that they felt that a more energy-efficient home could help improve air quality, while 38 percent cited telecommuting as a viable alternative that they'd be willing to explore.

Respondents also expressed increased willingness to change their daily routines in light of a red or orange air quality day. Of those surveyed, 48 percent said they would change their routines “a lot or some” if they heard a red or orange day was in the forecast, which represented a seven percent increase over 2007, and the highest percentage response in nine years.

This year’s survey also revealed concerns over the effects of air pollution on area businesses. While over 19 percent of respondents noted they felt that air pollution in the St. Louis region has gotten better over the last few years, 79 percent noted that potential increased regulations on businesses in the region were a “very or somewhat serious” effect of air pollution, which represented an almost eight percent jump over last year. In addition, more than 63 percent of respondents stated that the threat of residents and businesses leaving the region for areas with cleaner air was a “very or somewhat serious” effect. Concerns regarding the negative health effects of air pollution on children and the elderly also topped the list.

As always, The Partnership will also utilize the survey results to guide our efforts for the 2009 season to pinpoint areas where additional outreach work can be done, in order to keep people and businesses in the region engaged in the air quality effort, and willing to do their part to help clear the air.

i. *Rideshare Fairs and New Carpools/Varpools/Transit Riders*

RideFinders, the regional ridesharing agency, continued its active involvement with The Partnership, hosting 285 Clean Air Fairs and promotional activities between April and August as part of its air quality season campaign that generated 1,391 matchlists and 447 carpools.

Citizens for Modern Transit (CMT) also continued its outreach efforts to regional employers and transit riders throughout the metro area. In 2008, the organization introduced its Ten Toe Express program to area commuters. The program is designed to increase the number of individuals who integrate walking with public transit when en route to various St. Louis destinations and/or to and from work, and promotes the health and well-being benefits of doing so. During the year, CMT registered 1,455 commuters for the program. The organization also registered 2,190 new transit riders for the Guaranteed Ride Home program in 2008, bringing the total number of commuters registered to just over 9,500. CMT also signed on a

number of new employers for its transit benefit programs during the year, including Companion, UMB Bank, KAI Design Build and the Metropolitan Sewer District.

Skyrocketing gas prices also led to ridership milestones for both RideFinders and Metro. During 2008, the number of commuters sharing the ride to work in a RideFinders carpool or vanpool soared past 9,000, representing 4 million annual passenger trips and a 32 percent gain over 2007. And, at Metro, the number of annual passenger boardings approached 60 million. Madison County Transit also saw steady ridership increases during the year.

Ongoing Communications Initiatives

During 2008, The Partnership continued to utilize a variety of communication tools to keep its partners and the public at large informed about the regional clean air efforts in progress.

Public relations remained a key component of The Partnership's communications program. During the Air Quality Awareness Campaign, it was used extensively to educate the public about the impact of poor air quality and to inform residents about steps they could take on poor air quality days to improve the region's air quality. It was also used to promote events and new initiatives, such as the Clean Air Fair at Kiener Plaza, the Clayton Clean Air Festival and to highlight ways area residents could have a "greener" holiday season. The results included dozens of articles and interviews about the issue of air quality in our region during 2008.

Looking Forward

Plans are already underway for the 2009 Air Quality Awareness Campaign. The Partnership is actively seeking new members and can work with any size employer, in any industry in the St. Louis region to help identify an existing employee who can serve as a CAC and be the liaison to The Partnership. Participation is free and requires little time commitment, so any company or organization can become part of the region's clean air effort. The Partnership also will continue to recruit major St. Louis venues to help encourage their customers to go green and do their share clean air.

As the coordinator of The Partnership's day-to-day activities, the American Lung Association of the Central States also is tasked with overseeing The Partnership's funding. The Partnership is continually funded by in-kind donations and federal Congestion Mitigation Air Quality (CMAQ) monies and has been since its inception in 1995. In-kind donations in recent years total more than \$450,000 annually.

Contact The Partnership

For more information on the St. Louis Regional Clean Air Partnership and its programs, or to learn more about how to get involved in The Partnership's efforts, visit www.cleanair-stlouis.com, or call (314) 645-5505, ext. 1007.

#