



County of Rockland Department of Health NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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AIR QUALITY HEALTH ADVISORY ISSUED FOR WEDNESDAY SEPTEMBER 1st, 2010

POMONA, NY – Rockland County Department of Health Commissioner Dr. Joan H. Facelle is alerting residents that an Air Quality Health Advisory for all of New York State, including Rockland County, has been issued for September 1, 2010. Air Quality Health Advisories are issued by the New York State Department of Health and Department of Environmental Conservation when levels of pollution, either ozone or fine particulate matter, are expected to exceed national air quality standards.

The pollutant of concern for the Air Quality Health Advisory is ozone.

The Rockland County Department of Health recommends that residents limit strenuous outdoor physical activity, such as jogging, ball-playing and running during the afternoon and early evening hours when ozone levels are highest. People with existing respiratory ailments may be especially sensitive to the effects of ozone and should limit all outdoor exercise and physical exertion when ozone levels are elevated. Young children and elderly persons are also susceptible. It is helpful to remain in an air-conditioned location. People exposed to elevated levels of ozone may experience a variety of symptoms. The most common symptom is a feeling of irritation in the eyes, nose and throat. Some people may also experience respiratory symptoms such as shortness of breath, chest pain, and wheezing. Even without such symptoms, people exposed to ozone may have changes in their lung function that can last for several days before returning to normal. Some people experience these effects as “feeling tired” or “lacking energy.” Individuals experiencing symptoms such as shortness of breath, chest pain or coughing should consult their doctor or seek medical attention immediately.

Whenever possible, try to limit outdoor activities during peak ozone hours. Schedule outdoor exercise or activities for the morning hours when ozone levels are generally lower. “Ozone levels are usually highest after noon and through early evening hours on hot, sunny days, and therefore this part of the day is the peak time for symptoms. Performing vigorous exercise outdoors such as running also makes a person more likely to experience symptoms from exposure to ozone,” said Dr. Facelle, Rockland County Commissioner of Health.

Residents can stay informed about current air quality conditions by calling the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation Air Quality Hotline at 1-800-535-1345, or by visiting their web site (http://www.dec.ny.gov/cfm/xtapps/aqi/aqi_forecast.cfm). Information is also available by calling the New York State Department of Health Environmental Hotline at 1-800-458-1158, or by visiting their web site (www.health.state.ny.us).

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