

OZONE ACTION DAY MAY 6 ON GULF COAST DUE TO WEATHER CONDITIONS

(BILOXI, Miss.) – The Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality’s (MDEQ) Air Division

forecast an Ozone Action Day for Thursday, May 6. Ozone forecasting and Ozone Action Days are

based on weather conditions and are unrelated to the oil spill in the Gulf. MDEQ forecasts a few high

ozone days between April and October each year including on the Coast. MDEQ’s Air Division continues to monitor ozone and PM2.5.

MDEQ issues a daily ozone forecast and ozone air quality index for the Mississippi Gulf Coast. This is

made available to the general public as well as being provided to weather media for inclusion in daily

weather reports. Orange level alerts encourage businesses to put their "Ozone Reduction Plan" into

action and also so that individuals can reduce vehicle emissions. Also, it is a good idea for members of

the sensitive population to reduce their outside activities during the afternoon and early evening hours

on Ozone Action Days.

“We are pleased to take questions from the public about issues and understand people’s concerns. We

want to ensure people that these ozone action days are due to weather conditions and are not related to

oil spill activities in the Gulf. There are on average several ozone action days per year. We encourage

people to continue to contact our agency with any environmental questions or concerns they have,” said

MDEQ Executive Director Trudy Fisher.

In the Earth’s lower atmosphere, near ground level, ozone occurs naturally at lower amounts and additional ozone is formed when pollutants emitted by cars, power plants, industrial boilers, refineries,

chemical plants, and other sources react chemically in the presence of sunlight. Ground-level ozone at

elevated levels can be harmful to sensitive populations.

The Ozone Air Quality Index Forecast for the Gulf Coast is available at:

<http://opc.deq.state.ms.us/aqi/aqi-msgulfcoastozone.htm>.

Information on ozone and some simple changes for people to help on ozone action days can be found at:

http://www.deq.state.ms.us/MDEQ.nsf/page/Air_Ozone?OpenDocument.

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