

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## CLEAN AIR ACTION DAY ALERT FOR FINE PARTICLE POLLUTION EXTENDED THROUGH WEDNESDAY IN DANE COUNTY

***NOTE TO LOCAL NEWS MEDIA: Please help communicate this urgent pollution prevention message to Dane County area residents. Fine particle pollution levels could potentially exceed the federal health standard from today through Wednesday night.***

The Dane County Clean Air Coalition (CAC) today announced that it is extending its *Clean Air Action Day Alert* for fine particle pollution **through Wednesday, November 25th**.

### What You Can Do to Reduce Fine Particle Pollution

- Carpool, ride Metro Transit bus, walk or bike to work or recreational activities.
- Combine errands and reduce trips.
- Don't let engines idle -- It gets 0 MPG!
- Conserve energy at home and work by turning off unnecessary lighting, computers and other electrical devices when not in use.
- Open burning and use of burn barrels should be reduced. Avoid use of outdoor wood burning boilers and fireplaces.
- If you use a wood burning stove, make sure it is an efficient model; burn dry wood.

A *Clean Air Action Day* is triggered when the state Department of Natural Resources (DNR) issues an Air Quality Watch for Dane County. The initial Air Quality Watch and resulting Clean Air Action Day was announced during the weekend but has now been extended through Wednesday because weather conditions such as light winds and high relative humidity are forecast to continue. These weather patterns create ideal conditions for trapping fine particles -- produced by driving vehicles, generating electricity, wood burning and certain agricultural operations --and allowing them to build to potentially unhealthy levels.

Yesterday and today, Dane County experienced fine particle pollution levels that exceeded the federal threshold for "unhealthy for sensitive groups" such as children, older adults, people with asthma or heart disease and adults engaged in vigorous outdoor activities.

Dane County air quality currently meets state and federal standards. However, air pollution measurements taken during the past few years indicate that, especially as Dane County continues to grow, actions must be taken to ensure our air remains healthy into the future. By taking voluntary actions today, residents, businesses and local governments can help avoid the possibility of more drastic mandatory federal regulations costing consumers and businesses millions of dollars in the future.

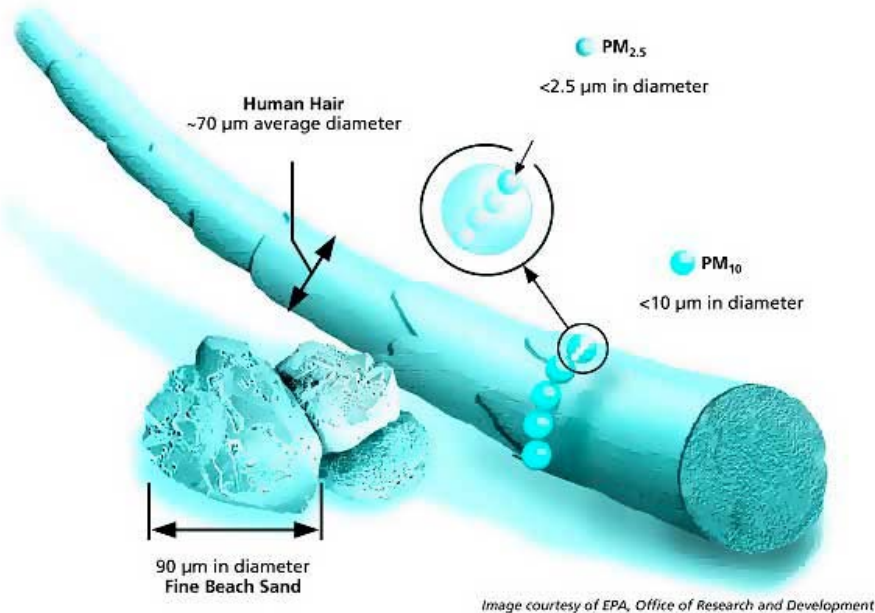
"On fine particle *Clean Air Action Days* we ask government agencies, businesses and residents in the County to join us in taking some simple voluntary actions that will reduce fine particle emissions, protect the health of local residents and help ensure that Dane County continues to comply with all federal air quality standards," said Lisa MacKinnon, Project Coordinator of the Clean Air Coalition.

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Since the establishment in 2008 of a stricter federal health-based standard for fine particle pollution, Dane County has come closer to the threshold for being declared a “non-attainment area” for fine particle air pollution. Fine particles are very small particles with diameters less than 2.5 microns (about 30 times smaller than the diameter of a human hair).

Over half of Dane County’s air pollutants come from our cars and trucks, as well as other gasoline and diesel engines that power everything from construction equipment to leaf blowers. Due to their small size, fine particles are easily inhaled and are deeply deposited into the lungs, which can aggravate and even cause serious health problems such as heart and lung disease. On a *Clean Air Action Day*, residents are advised to monitor their health and to consult their physician if they have any health-related concerns.

For more information on Clean Air Action Days, visit the Dane County Clean Air Coalition website at [www.healthyairedane.org](http://www.healthyairedane.org). Air Quality Watches and Advisories will be posted on the main DNR internet page, <http://dnr.wi.gov/>, as soon as they are issued. The Air Quality Hotline is 1-866-DAILY AIR (1-866-324-5924) and will be updated when watches or advisories are issued. To sign up for the DNR listserv and receive watches or advisories by e-mail, go to <http://dnr.wi.gov/org/aw/air/health/listserv.html>.



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