



St. Louis Regional Clean Air Partnership

2004: The Year in Review

Executive Summary

Air Quality in the St. Louis region continued to improve in 2004. While there have been many contributing factors to the positive trend over the past few years, ranging from great weather to the requirement for Stage II vapor recovery nozzles on all gasoline pumps, the St. Louis Regional Clean Air Partnership believes the regional efforts underway to promote voluntary, emissions reducing actions also are positively impacting the air we breath.

The Partnership has been the driving force behind the region's voluntary clean air initiatives since its formation in 1995 by the American Lung Association of Missouri, St. Louis Regional Chamber and Growth Association, East-West Gateway Council of Governments, Washington University and others. Since its debut almost 10 years ago, the St. Louis Regional Clean Air Partnership has held steadfast to its mission: to increase awareness of regional air quality issues and to encourage activities to reduce air pollution emissions. Operating as a public-private partnership, approximately 500 area businesses, organizations, schools, hospitals and government agencies are current members of The Partnership, working together in support of the organization's mission.

The Partnership is best known for its daily air quality forecasting, which takes place over the summer months and is designed to engage the public in the regional clean air effort. An aggressive outreach campaign focuses on educating area residents and businesses regarding various steps they can take on a daily basis to reduce emissions.

When the forecast calls for poor air quality in the form of an "orange" or "red day", the American Lung Association, which handles the day-to-day activities for The Partnership, notifies the designated Clean Air Coordinator (CAC) or Employee Transportation Coordinator (ETC) at member worksites as part of the Air Quality Forecast alert system. That way, they can spread the word to fellow employees and customers and remind them to consider taking actions to reduce emissions to protect their health and the health of others in our community.

A key initiative includes encouraging citizens to choose alternatives to driving alone, such as carpooling and taking mass transit, since these options can drastically reduce emissions and have many benefits for participants too. Active partners such as Metro, Madison County Transit, RideFinders and Citizens for Modern Transit play an important role in encouraging behaviors to reduce automobile emissions, both among the hundreds of partners and in the community at large.

As with last year, the underlying message for the 2004 season was ***Care About Clean Air. Choose a Better Way to Go.*** In keeping with that, The Partnership encouraged individuals to reduce solo commuting and instead, try taking MetroLink or the bus or consider contacting RideFinders to create or join an existing carpool or vanpool.

The Partnership's call to action took on enhanced importance during the past year following the US EPA's April 15, 2004 designation of the region as a non-attainment area for the eight-hour standard for ozone pollution levels. The new designation came just months after the region was declared to be in attainment of the one-hour standard. It sets the national ambient air quality standard for ground-level ozone at 0.08 parts per million averaged over an eight-hour timeframe.

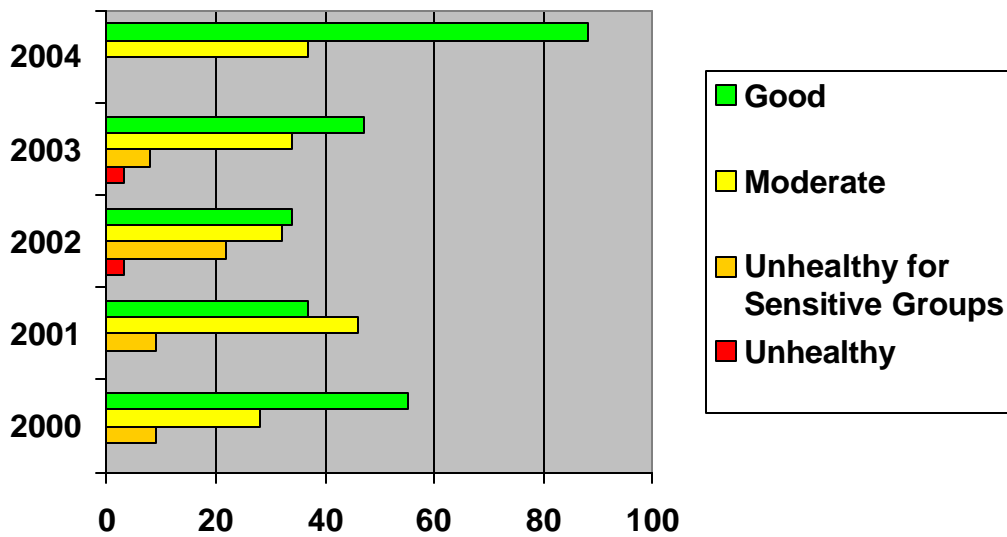
The April 15 changes that ushered in the new eight-hour standard also added Jersey County, Ill., to the non-attainment area, which now includes the City of St. Louis and eight surrounding counties (St. Louis, St. Charles, Jefferson and Franklin in Missouri and Madison, St. Clair, Monroe and Jersey in Illinois.) According to the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency, despite the fact that Jersey County has fewer people and less industry than other counties also classified as non-attainment, it is affected by transport from the St. Louis urbanized area and other upwind source regions.

As it works toward meeting the new, more stringent air quality standards, The Partnership has expanded its outreach to businesses and major venues throughout the region encouraging them to participate in voluntary ozone reduction measures, such as designating a CAC/ETC at their worksite or working with The Partnership to assist with its consumer awareness initiatives.

The following pages recap the results of the 2004 Air Quality Season, summarize the key highlights and initiatives, 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.

2004 Air Quality Forecast Tally

A mild summer helped ensure that the St. Louis region's 2004 Air Quality Season was one of the most pleasant in recent history for area residents who suffer from lung ailments. The St. Louis Regional Clean Air Partnership reported 88 good or "green" air quality days, 37 moderate or "yellow" air quality days and **zero** orange or red days with air quality in the unhealthy ranges. The number of green "good" air quality days increased 87 percent over the 2003 season, indicating that overall the 2004 air quality season was much improved over years prior.



The chart above is a comparative analysis of the number of green, yellow, orange and red air quality days during the 2000-2004 air quality seasons based on the Air Quality Index measurements.

2004 Air Quality Forecasting Season Highlights

a. Kick-Off Event

More than 500 downtown St. Louis employees gathered at Kiener Plaza to help the Partnership kick off the 2004 Air Quality Season on May 17th. The Kick-Off event provided a great opportunity for the Partnership to offer downtown employees a wealth of information about the ways they can help to reduce emissions. Attendees visited tables hosted by more than a dozen fair participants and had a chance to get an autograph from Kent Ehrhardt, chief meteorologist for KMOV Channel 4. Huey's Honda provided a demo car to showcase the 2004 Honda Civic Hybrid that was to be given away by Honda at the end of Air Quality Season as part of KMOV's Greenday Giveaways. Other organizations that participated in providing information at the event, included:

- American Lung Association of Missouri
- Citizens for Modern Transit
- East-West Gateway Council of Governments
- Gateway Clean Air Program
- KMOV Channel 4
- Laclede Gas
- Madison County Transit
- Metro
- Missouri Department of Natural Resources
- Missouri Department of Transportation
- RideFinders
- St. Louis Community Air Project
- St. Louis Regional Clean Cities Program
- Trailnet

Our thanks to all the ETCs and CACs who helped to promote the event in advance and to all the exhibitors. The open-air fair will likely become an annual event to kick off the season.

b. New Partners for the 2004 Season

The Partnership set out this year to add to the hundreds of area businesses and organizations that are working with the Partnership to spread the clean air message. Joining the effort during the 2004 season were several new partners, including:

The St. Louis Post-Dispatch – which enabled us to leverage a small advertising commitment by running several additional PSA style ads for The Partnership that helped us to get our message in front of their readers numerous times throughout the summer months. In all, the Post-Dispatch provided approximately 5 pages of unpaid advertising support – a significant and much appreciated contribution;

UMB Bank Pavilion – which displayed and distributed The Partnership brochures at its box office and provided prominent display place for an oversized poster with air quality tips, helping us to reach thousands of concert-goers over the summer months;

19 branches of the **St. Louis City Library System** and 20 branches of the **St. Louis County Library System** which provided additional distribution points for The Partnership's materials;

The St. Louis Zoo and Sigma-Aldrich – which became actively involved by appointing a designated CAC who committed to distributing the air quality forecasts and sharing other important air quality information with their fellow employees;

St. Louis Cardinals – which teamed up with us to produce a PSA featuring Mike Matheny and KMOV Channel 4's Kent Ehrhardt promoting carpooling and transit as great alternative modes;

Festus School District – which distributed a letter and flyer with tips for reducing emissions during the 2004 air quality season to approximately 1,300 students and their families;

SSM Healthcare – which has several facilities that have been actively involved in The Partnership's efforts for the past several years, but is now taking their involvement to the next level. They recently agreed to have their director of corporate responsibility serve on The Partnership's executive committee and play an active role in helping the organization to gain commitments from other St. Louis area corporations to step up their efforts to help clear the air.

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

c. Green Day Giveaway Round-up

The Partnership was fortunate to have the opportunity to, once again, team up with KMOV Channel 4 for the Green Day Giveaway Promotion and benefited from significant on-air exposure in the form of PSAs and other coverage throughout the season. The promotion ran from June 7 through September 17, 2004, with prizes being awarded to randomly drawn winners each time Kent Ehrhardt, Chief Meteorologist of KMOV Channel 4, forecasted a “green” or “good” air quality day. Area residents had the opportunity to register to win the daily prize giveaways online at KMOV’s web site, www.KMOV.com, or by mailing a postcard to KMOV. Winners were chosen randomly on “green” forecasted days and received prize packages valued at \$120.

At the conclusion of the season, KMOV Channel 4 did a random drawing from the 31,000 + cumulative entries received to determine the lucky Green Day Giveaway grand prize winner. The Grand Prize package, worth \$21,650, included an ultra-low emissions 2004 Honda Civic hybrid car, courtesy of local area Honda dealers, a year worth of MetroLink and MetroBus passes from Metro and one of the great daily prize packages that were given to lucky residents on forecasted green days throughout the summer. **Brenda Kasten of Alton, Ill.**, was the lucky grand prize winner.



The contest is held annually by KMOV as part of The Partnership’s ongoing efforts to draw attention to our region’s air quality and encourage people to reduce emissions so we have more good or “green” air quality days.

d. *Rideshare Fairs and New Carpools/Vanpools/Transit Riders*

RideFinders, the regional ridesharing agency, continued its active involvement with The Partnership, hosting more than 60 fairs between April and September as part of its air quality season campaign. Citizens for Modern Transit (CMT) also continued its outreach efforts to regional employers and transit riders throughout the metro area. As a result, CMT issued 175 Tastes of Transits and signed up an additional 500 new transit commuters in 2004, bringing the total number of registered transit riders to 6731. RideFinders also posted some big gains, with the flurry of fairs over the summer months contributing to continued growth in the program. RideFinders wrapped up the year with more than 4,400 registered carpoolers and vanpoolers and active ridesharing programs at 500+ area employers.

e. *Best Workplaces for Commuters Program Debuts in St. Louis*

Best Workplaces for CommutersSM, a voluntary partnership program created by the U.S. EPA and spearheaded locally by the American Lung Association, Citizens for Modern Transit (CMT), RideFinders and the St. Louis Regional Clean Air Partnership, made its debut in St. Louis during the 2004 Air Quality Season recognizing 26 area companies that excel in providing environmentally-friendly commuter benefits to employees. Their exemplary efforts made them the first in our metro area to gain recognition as the **St. Louis Region's Best Workplaces for CommutersSM**. The program, designed to reduce traffic congestion and traffic-related air pollution, spotlights companies that provide benefits for their employees to make it not only easier for them to take transit, carpool or vanpool or even telecommute but also financially beneficial. Employers whose benefits packages help them to qualify for the list are demonstrating they are truly committed to reducing pollution, commuting costs, traffic congestion, and employee stress caused by single-occupant vehicle commuting.

The 26 employers in the St. Louis region who made the list, include:

- Blackwell, Sanders, Peper, Martin
- Center for Financial Training
- Citizens for Modern Transit
- Defense Contract Management Agency St. Louis
- Department of Veterans Affairs, St. Louis
- Development Strategies
- The Experiment
- The Hauser Group
- Lashly & Baer, P.C.
- Metro (St. Louis, MO)
- NATIONAL GEOSPATIAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
- Public School Retirement System of St. Louis
- National Park Service, Jefferson National Expansion Memorial
- Scott Air Force Base
- Southwestern Illinois College
- St. Louis Regional Chamber and Growth Association
- The Stolar Partnership LLP
- Thompson Coburn
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- U.S. Army Logistics Systems Support Office
- U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
- U.S. Internal Revenue Service
- U.S. Social Security Administration
- USDA Rural Development, St. Louis
- Washington University
- Washington University School of Medicine

Ongoing Communications Initiatives

Communication of new programs, ideas and initiatives is a crucial element in keeping the various partners and the public at large up to speed on the regional clean air efforts and progress. To that end, The Partnership continues to utilize a variety of communications tools to get the word out.

Public relations remains a key component of the communications program for The Partnership. During the 2004 season it was used to promote events such as the Clean Air Fair at Kiener Plaza, spotlight individual families dealing with asthma who are intimately affected by poor air quality, generate general interest articles about the issue of air quality in our region and to showcase the winner of the Green Day Giveaway.

Through our **media partners** we also were able to keep The Partnership's message in the Post-Dispatch and on KMOV-TV via PSAs and promo spots throughout the season.

In 2004 the Partnership also introduced its new online newsletter - ***The Clean Air Chronicle***. The Chronicle was used as a tool to keep the CACs and ETCs at partnering companies and organizations informed and engaged at key points during the 2004 season by recapping recent events, providing updates on air quality forecasting and programs, announcements of new partners, and more. The Partnership hopes to continue publishing the Chronicle once or twice during future air quality seasons to help keep partners up to date.

The Partnership's website at www.cleanair-stlouis.com also plays a role in informing and educating the general public about air quality issues. The site includes links to the latest local and national news about environmental issues and a place where individuals can sign up for the daily air quality forecast alerts. The website will be updated and redesigned for improved functionality before the 2005 season.

Finally, The Partnership introduced a Year End Report to provide a quick overview of the highlights of the prior season for partners and other key constituents.

Summary of 2004 Survey Findings

In keeping with the past several years, The Partnership commissioned a survey to help measure where people in the region stand in terms of awareness about and attitudes toward our region's air quality.

Results from the 2004 survey are generally positive. While there appeared to be little change in responses for many of the questions asked, the report emphasized that results that appear stagnant are actually quite positive in a year of no poor air quality days. It would be expected for results to dip dramatically when respondents do not hear daily forecasts in the summer for upcoming poor air quality days, but awareness remained high despite a summer filled with mostly green days.

Respondents understand the seriousness of poor air quality, are familiar with daily air quality information, but are slightly less likely to know when there is a red or orange air quality day in St. Louis. Since there were no red or orange air quality days this summer, the report indicates that many respondents may feel they *must* have been less aware because they don't recall hearing of any. In keeping with this slight decline in results, respondents were slightly less likely to change their behavior on poor air quality days.

"Economic development" was the top concern among local challenges facing the St. Louis area. "Environmental problems" moved to third on the list, after traffic and congestion. Among those environmental concerns, poor air quality remains at the top, followed by inadequate recycling programs.

The American Lung Association has done a good job (primarily through television) of communicating the meaning of "red" and "orange" air quality days and their possible health effects. (Channel 4 and Channel 5 are still the top sources for this air quality information.) Not only do 75% of respondents know the term "red air quality day," a majority know when a red air quality day is predicted for St. Louis. Close than eight-in-ten respondents were familiar with "orange air quality days," a term introduced in 1999.

Respondents were aware of what actions would most improve air quality, though less than half would take any action to reduce air pollution. For those who actively change their behavior on poor air quality days, a significant majority do so for their health and not for prevention.

Looking Forward

Plans are already in full swing for the 2005 Air Quality Forecasting Season. 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 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 care about clean air.

As the coordinator of The Partnership's activities, the American Lung Association also is tasked with overseeing The Partnership's funding. The Partnership has been funded by in-kind donations and federal Congestion Mitigation Air Quality (CMAQ) monies since its inception in 1995. In-kind donations in recent years total more than \$450,000 annually. The existing CMAQ grant will cover The Partnership's operations through the 2005 air quality forecasting season. The American Lung Association is currently pursuing additional grant monies and working with various other members of The Partnership to identify other sources of funds to support the ongoing work of The Partnership in the future.

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.