

Do Your Share for Cleaner Air

*St. Louis Regional Clean Air Partnership
2007 in Review*

Executive Summary

Formed 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, The St. Louis Regional Clean Air 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.

Today, more than a decade since the launch of The Partnership, almost 70 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.

On the heels of the American Lung Association's 2007 State of the Air report, which ranked St. Louis as the 10th most polluted city in the country, The Partnership kicked off its 2007 air quality awareness campaign with a message that encouraged area residents to transform their awareness of St. Louis' air quality issues into action. To get the public moving, The Partnership offered residents a list of 10 easy ways they could do their share to reduce emissions and ensure that the region's air quality stays at healthy levels. The list highlighted the benefits of considering alternative transportation modes such as carpooling and mass transit, shed light on the important role trip planning and utilizing flex-time and telecommuting options can play and reminded individuals of the many additional steps they can take at home and at work to help clear the air, such as gassing-up after dark, adjusting the thermostat and walking to lunch, rather than driving.

At the end of 2007, nearly 1,000 area businesses, organizations, schools, hospitals and government agencies had signed up as members of The Partnership, doing their part to voluntarily reduce emissions.

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

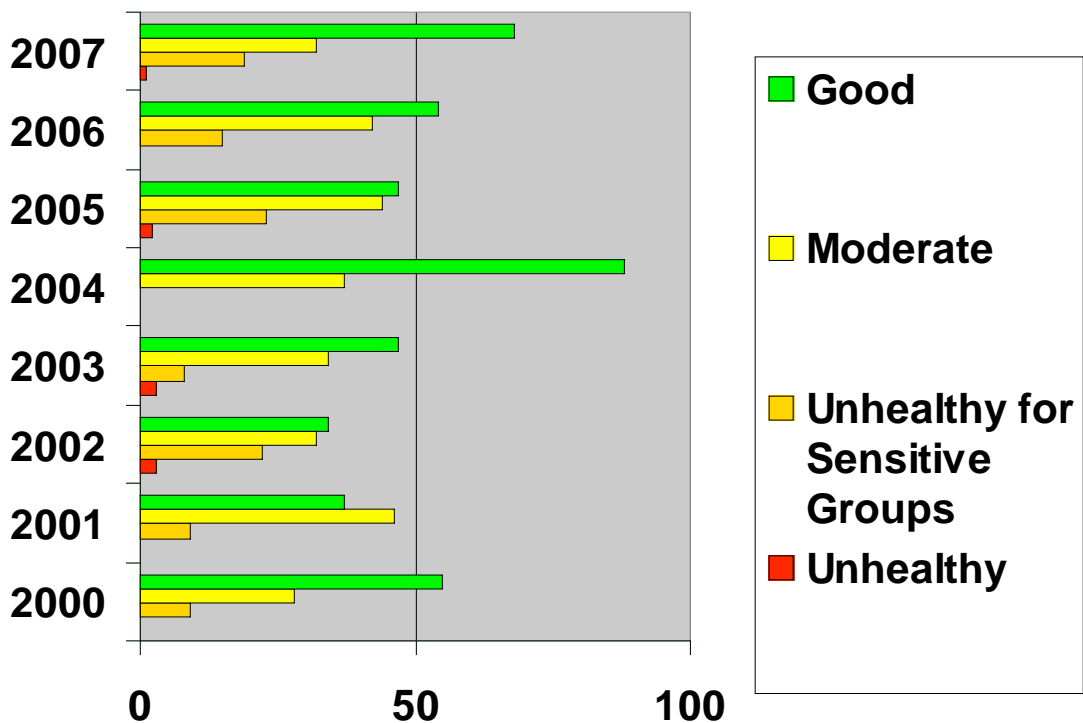
system. Each day, the American Lung Association, which handles the day-to-day activities for The Partnership, provides these contacts with the day's air quality forecast. The CAC or ETC then spreads the word to fellow employees and customers and remind them to consider taking actions to reduce emissions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

Active 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 2007 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.

[2007 Air Quality Forecast Tally](#)

The air quality in St. Louis was fairly consistent in 2007 as compared to 2006. Through September 15, the 2007 Air Quality Season saw just one unhealthy or “red” day (compared to 0 in 2006) and 19 “orange” days - when the ozone pollution reached levels considered unhealthy for sensitive groups. That represented just a few more “orange” days than the year prior. On the positive side, the St. Louis region enjoyed an impressive 68 good or “green” air quality days, and 32 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 2000-2007 air quality seasons based on the Air Quality Index measurements. The information is invalidated.

2007 Highlights

a. *New tagline – Do Your Share for Cleaner Air*

2007 brought a new Clean Air Partnership tagline designed to call area residents into action. The new “Do Your Share for Cleaner Air” theme is designed to encourage residents to transform their awareness of St. Louis’ air quality issues into action by taking steps to reduce emissions and improve the region’s air quality. The new theme was incorporated into all of The Partnership’s marketing materials and ads during the 2007 season and will be continued in 2008.

b. *Kick-off Event*

On May 18, a record crowd of approximately 1,000 downtown St. Louis employees gathered at Kiener Plaza to help The Partnership kick off the start of air quality forecasting for 2007. For the first time ever, the event was held on a Friday, and as in years past, it 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 more than a dozen informational booths manned by Partnership members. Radio station KHITS 96 FM was also 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
- Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America – St. Louis Chapter
- Citizens for Modern Transit
- Madison County Transit
- Metro
- Missouri Department of Natural Resources
- Missouri Department of Transportation
- RideFinders
- St. Louis Regional Clean Cities Program
- SuiteCommute
- Trailnet
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Our thanks go out to all the ETCs and CACs who helped to promote the event in advance and to all our exhibitors.

c. *Clayton Clean Air Festivals*

The Partnership stepped up its outreach efforts to the Clayton community by hosting its largest ever Clean Air Festivals in downtown Clayton in July and September. Held as part of the city's Wonderful Wednesdays monthly series of summer events, the events provided Clayton employees with convenient access to free information on how to do their share to help keep the region's air quality in healthy ranges during the I-64 reconstruction project and beyond. Like the annual events in Kiener Plaza, the Clayton events featured live music, free Ted Drewes frozen custard and more than a dozen 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 events included:

- The American Lung Association of the Central States
- The Asthma and Allergy Foundation – St. Louis Chapter
- Citizens for Modern Transit
- The Environmental Protection Agency
- Metro
- The Missouri Department of Transportation
- RideFinders
- The St. Louis County Department of Health
- Trailnet

As with our annual kick-off events, we thank all of our exhibitors for their participation and look forward to working with you on additional events in the Clayton area in 2008.



d. *I-64 Clean Air Challenge launch*

With the shutdown of I-64 approaching, the St. Louis Regional Clean Air Partnership launched its newest initiative, known as the I-64 Clean Air Challenge in August. Designed to educate area residents about the link between construction-related traffic congestion and poor air quality, the challenge is focused on encouraging area residents to pledge to do at least one thing to help keep the region's air quality in healthy ranges during the I-64 reconstruction project and beyond. Specifically, The Partnership is using the Challenge to emphasize the need for individuals to take steps such as carpooling or vanpooling, utilizing mass transit, finding alternate routes to work or taking advantage of flex-time and telecommuting options during the I-64 project, in order to alleviate traffic congestion and the related release of emissions that can lead to poor air quality.

The I-64 Clean Air Challenge kicked-off with a press conference held in mid-August on the rooftop of the Brentwood-I-64 MetroLink/MetroBus parking garage. Representatives from the Missouri Department of Transportation, Citizens for Modern Transit, RideFinders, Gateway Constructors and the East-West Gateway Council of Governments joined The Partnership for the press conference, which was attended by numerous St. Louis media outlets who helped to spread the word to area residents and businesses that the challenge was underway.

Clean Air Challenge pledges were made on The Partnership's website, and via paper pledge cards distributed at Partnership events held last fall. To encourage residents to make their pledges, The Partnership teamed up with the Emmis and Bonneville radio groups, which offered a number of incentive prizes, including trips to Mexico and the Dominican Republic, for those who made pledges within the first 64 days of the Challenge. We also collaborated with KMOX to sponsor the Forest Park Balloon Race, further raising awareness about the challenge. By encouraging residents to make their pledges early, The Partnership's goal was to get residents to find a suitable commuting alternative in advance of the I-64 shutdown, try it out and be ready to use the alternative on an ongoing basis during the project. To date, nearly 800 area residents have made pledges to do their share for cleaner air during the I-64 reconstruction project. New pledges will be accepted throughout the duration of the I-64 project.

e. *Citizens for Modern Transit/Clean Air Partnership joint marketing initiative*

Last spring, Citizens for Modern Transit (CMT) and The Partnership joined forces to spread the word to local employers about the benefits of alternative transportation modes. In May, the organizations embarked on a summer-long joint outreach project targeting area businesses with the goal of encouraging employers to help their employees take advantage of mass transit, ridesharing, flexible work schedules and other alternative transportation arrangements during the I-64 reconstruction project to help ease traffic congestion and the related release of harmful emissions that contribute to poor air quality.

The outreach was focused on the Clayton area and included a combination of direct mail postcards which were distributed to members of the Clayton Chamber of Commerce and print advertising targeting Clayton residents & businesses. Members of the Downtown St. Louis Partnership were also included in the direct mail outreach, since a number of downtown

employees commute from Clayton to an office in downtown St. Louis. The mailings, ads and related media coverage helped to raise awareness among the target audiences about the various alternatives that would help to keep traffic rolling in the wake of the I-64 shutdown.

During the 2007 season, The Partnership also embarked on a variety of other air quality outreach initiatives. These included:

- 1) **Outreach to area car dealerships** - At the start of the season, The Partnership contacted hybrid car dealerships in the area to determine their interest in distributing "car care kits" to their hybrid car buyers. The kits contained a window decal and informational flyer highlighting tips for hybrid fuel efficiency. The Partnership developed the kits and distributed them to seven area dealerships who agreed to provide them to their hybrid customers during the year.
- 2) **Outreach to private high schools along I-64 corridor** - With the shut-down of I-64 pending, The Partnership contacted private high schools along the I-64 corridor to solicit their help in educating students and faculty about the link between traffic congestion. First, The Partnership contacted editors and advisors from the newspapers at the high schools along I-64 to encourage them to pursue a story on the importance of sharing the ride to school during the I-64 project. The Partnership also contacted science and environmental advisors at the schools to discuss their interest in signing up with The Partnership as a CAC or ETC. Several schools requested interviews with Susannah for stories to run in their papers, Villa Duchesne and St. Louis Priory Schools have agreed to become new Partnership members, and our follow up with these schools will continue during 2008.

c. *New and Continued Partnerships*

During the 2007 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 2007 included the following:

1) In May, the **Belleville and Granite City, Illinois School Districts** followed in the footsteps of the **University City, Festus and Parkway School Districts** by distributing a letter and flyer with tips for reducing emissions to their K-8th Grade Students during the year. Combined, the five schools distributed more than 25,000 flyers to their students prior to the end of the school year.

2) For the first time ever, The Partnership also coordinated a flyer distribution during the fall at several Catholic schools in the area. Schools participating in the fall distribution were: **St. Francis Cabrini Academy, St. Joan of Arch Catholic School, St. Stephen Protomartyr. Catholic School and St. John the Baptist Catholic Elementary School**. Combined, the schools sent almost 1,000 additional flyers to their students.

3) **The St. Louis Post-Dispatch** ran almost two full pages of PSA-style ads for The Partnership that helped us to augment the exposure through the wraps we purchased, enabling us to get our message in front of their readers several times during the summer months. This unpaid advertising support was a much appreciated contribution.

4) **Belleville News Democrat** - Following in the footsteps of the Post-Dispatch the Belleville News Democrat worked with The Partnership to run PSA-style ads throughout the Air Quality Season on a space-available basis.

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

d. *2007 Air Quality Awareness Survey*

In the fall of 2007, 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 five 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 70 percent of those surveyed noted that they were "very or somewhat" familiar with daily air quality information, a slight increase since 2006. Nearly half of respondents also noted that they are "always" or "usually" aware when a red or orange day is declared in the area.

The survey also demonstrated increased awareness of actions designed to improve the region's air quality. For example, the number of respondents that said bringing their lunch to work or walking to lunch instead of driving could improve air quality jumped nearly 10 percent. In addition, actions such as carpooling to work, riding the bus or MetroLink and not filling up the gas tank before 7 p.m. also saw slight increases. An option to utilize flex-time at work was also added to the survey this year, and more than 37 percent of respondents stated that they felt that flexing their commutes to avoid the traditional rush hour could help improve the region's air quality.

This year's survey also revealed concerns over road construction projects and traffic congestion in the area. More than 80 percent of respondents indicated that road construction was a "very or somewhat" high priority challenge for the area, while just over 78 percent of those surveyed said traffic and congestion were "very or somewhat" high priority concerns.

The survey results demonstrate that the I-64 reconstruction project was top of mind for most area residents 2007. As a result, The Partnership was, and will continue to be, hard at work to educate the public on the link between construction-related traffic congestion and poor air quality, and to encourage area residents to trade in their solo commutes in favor of transit, carpooling or telecommuting to keep the air quality in healthy ranges and traffic moving throughout the duration of the I-64 project.

As always, The Partnership will also utilize the survey results to guide our efforts for the 2008 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.

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

RideFinders, the regional ridesharing agency, continued its active involvement with The Partnership, hosting 339 Clean Air Fairs and promotional activities between April and August as part of its air quality season campaign that generated 1,135 matchlists and 524 carpools. Citizens for Modern Transit (CMT) also continued its outreach efforts to regional employers and transit riders throughout the metro area. During 2007, CMT signed-up an additional 936 new transit commuters, bringing the total number of registered transit riders to 7,763. CMT also signed up numerous employers for its transit benefit programs. Companies signing on during the year included Anheuser-Busch, Monsanto and the Missouri Historical Society. RideFinders saw consistent gains in 2007, which helped the organization to set a number of new milestones. RideFinders wrapped up the year with more than 7,000 registered carpools and vanpools and active ridesharing programs at more than 1,200 employers. Metro and Madison County Transit also saw steady ridership increases during the year.

Ongoing Communications Initiatives

During 2007, 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 Festivals and the I-64 Clean Air Challenge, as well as to highlight the findings from the annual survey. The results included dozens of articles and interviews about the issue of air quality in our region during 2007.

Looking Forward

Plans are already underway for the 2008 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 care about 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 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. Heading into the 2008 season, The Partnership will continue to be funded through the current CMAQ grant secured in conjunction with the Missouri Department of Transportation, a long-time member of the partnership and active participant in the ongoing outreach efforts.

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.