

Enviro FACTSHEET

GROUND-LEVEL OZONE

Good up high, bad nearby

During the past decade, a lot of concern has been focused on the thinning of the Earth's ozone layer. This layer of ozone, far above the surface, blocks out harmful solar radiation, and is vital to the health of our entire planet. But ozone close to the ground becomes a hazard, not a help. As a primary ingredient of smog, ground-level ozone is one of West Virginia's recurring air pollution problems.

The 1970 Clean Air Act calls for federal, state and local governments to reduce ozone levels to what is believed to be a safe level. In 1997, EPA revised the ozone standard to 0.08 parts per million (ppm) and defined the new standard as a "concentration-based"

form, specifically the 3-year average of the annual 4th-highest daily 8-hour ozone concentrations.

Concentrations of ozone are monitored in West Virginia as part of a plan for maintaining compliance.

Industrial areas like Parkersburg, Charleston and Huntington pose the greatest risk of forming ozone pollution.

Ground-level ozone does not occur naturally, but is produced through a series of complex chemical reactions. These reactions involve volatile organic compounds, nitrogen oxides, atmospheric oxygen and heat from sunlight.

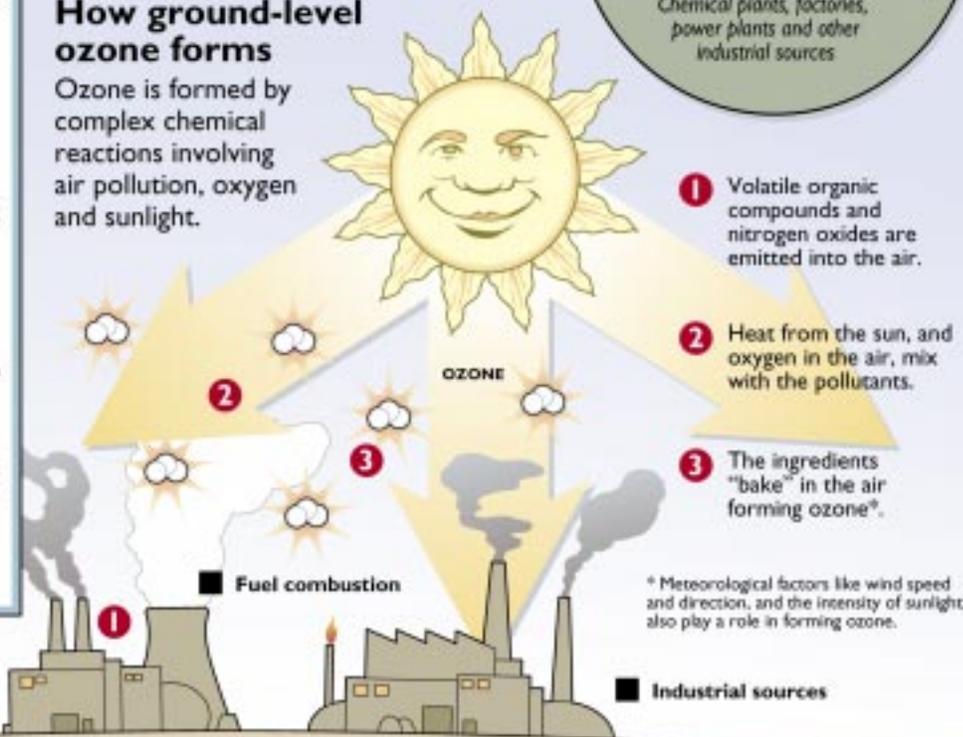


For more information contact:
WVDEP- Division of Air Quality
(304) 926-3731



How ground-level ozone forms

Ozone is formed by complex chemical reactions involving air pollution, oxygen and sunlight.



■ Transportation



■ Fuel combustion

■ Industrial sources

THREE MAJOR SOURCES OF VOLATILE ORGANIC COMPOUNDS

