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San Antonio Community Leaders Urge Aggressive Action on Ozone

Following EPA Announcement, Groups Emphasize Critical Need for Ozone Compliance

Today, a group of public health and environment experts, and key policy figures gathered in front of City Hall to speak publicly about the negative impacts of ground level ozone (smog) on San Antonio communities. The group also stressed the importance of a coordinated effort to tackle the city's air pollution problem.

"San Antonio's ozone air pollution is an immediate threat to public health that puts some of our most vulnerable communities at risk, including children, senior citizens, and those who suffer from asthma, COPD, or heart disease" said **Krystal Henagan, leader of the Moms Clean Air Force Texas chapter based in San Antonio.**

"Smog-forming ozone and soot can cause asthma attacks and heart attacks," said **Dr. Vince Fonseca, former State Epidemiologist for the Texas Department of State Health Services.** "Higher levels of ozone and soot can keep children out of school and put people in the hospital, but each one of us can make a contribution to cleaner, safer air in how we drive or travel, and how much energy we use at home."

"The fact that dangerous ozone levels disproportionately affect some of our most sensitive communities has not been properly addressed," said **Russell Seal, pharmacist and Sierra Club member.** "As a pharmacist, I see inhaler prescriptions surge during ozone season year after year. We have to do something to protect those who are most at risk."

The press conference was held just as the Environmental Protection Agency announced new limits for ozone air pollution. The new standards lowered the federal limit from 75 to 70 parts per billion (ppb). It is highly unlikely San Antonio will be in compliance with the new limits. In fact, San Antonio has been out of compliance with the old standards during the last three ozone seasons.

"The time for action is now," said **Peter Bella, former Alamo Area Council of Governments Natural Resources Director.** "It will take strong leadership to reduce San Antonio smog levels. We clearly need to reduce local pollution, but our city is also impacted by pollution from beyond our local region and any comprehensive plan to lower smog levels will need to address those outside pollution sources, too."

The new federal limits come less than one month after San Antonio recorded some of the highest levels of smog the city has seen this year.

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[**Moms Clean Air Force**](#) is a community of moms and dads united against air pollution – including the urgent crisis of our changing climate – to protect our children’s health. We arm members with reliable information and solutions through online resources, articles, action tools and on-the-ground events.