

Topic of the Month: Air Quality

As summer gets underway, the North Central Texas Council of Governments is focusing its attention on a vital aspect of our regional well-being: air quality.

In June, the Topic of the Month series will highlight the factors influencing the air we breathe, ongoing initiatives to improve it and resources available to stay informed and take action.

Join us as we delve into this important topic and explore how we can collectively work toward cleaner air for our communities.

Clean Air Action Day

Friday, June 6 is Clean Air Action Day, when North Texans are invited to improve air quality by making simple adjustments to their daily routines. Examples include:

- Use mass transit instead of driving
- If driving is necessary, take steps to reduce idling, such as avoiding drive-thrus or combining errands to minimize stops
- Carpool
- Work from home
- Bike or walk instead of driving

North Texans are invited to maintain the commitments they make on June 6 throughout the ozone season, which ends Nov. 30. For more tips, visit our [Clean Air Action Day page](#).

Why air quality matters in North Texas

Our region is designated as a nonattainment area for ozone under federal air quality standards. This means the air in North Texas sometimes exceeds levels considered healthy to breathe. Clinical studies have shown that prolonged exposure to elevated concentrations of ground-level ozone may result in health issues such as reduced lung function, more asthma episodes and less resistance to respiratory infections.

For more information, visit [NCTCOG's Air Quality page](#).

How you can make a difference

Every action, no matter how big or small, can contribute to cleaner air. Here are some ways residents, businesses and governments can help:

Residents:

- Reduce driving by carpooling, biking, walking or using public transit

- Refuel vehicles in the late afternoon or evening, when the temperature is cooler, leading to less evaporation of gasoline and fewer volatile organic compounds (VOCs) entering the atmosphere
- Avoid using gasoline-powered lawn equipment on Air Quality Action Days
- Conserve energy at home

Businesses:

- Encourage employee carpooling and telecommuting
- Maintain company vehicles properly
- Consider transitioning to electric vehicles
- Optimize delivery routes

Governments:

- Delay opening government buildings until 9 am or later
- Limit testing of emergency generators
- Move construction activities to evening hours
- Minimize roadway maintenance and limit lane closures

For more information on how to incorporate clean air actions into the routines of residents, businesses and governments, visit the [Air North Texas Take Action page](#).

What NCTCOG does to improve the air

Electric vehicle adoption

Promoting the adoption of electric vehicles is a key component to improving air quality. EVs produce zero tailpipe emissions, directly reducing pollutants that contribute to ozone formation. NCTCOG supports EV adoption through several initiatives, including Electric Vehicles North Texas (EVNT). Organized by the Dallas-Fort Worth Clean Cities Coalition, EVNT is an initiative designed to provide resources, technical assistance and host/coordinate local EV events to help clear the air on EV adoption. For more information, visit the [EVNT page](#).

Several interconnected projects are underway to enhance community readiness for the adoption of EVs in the region. The EMPOWER Workplace Charging Project focuses on educating and connecting workplaces with local EV charging coaches providing relevant resources. To address the need for a skilled EV workforce, the GUMBO initiative will integrate EV charging technician training into regional community colleges. And the Charging Smart program assists municipalities in establishing and achieving their EV readiness goals. For more information, visit www.dfwcleancities.org/gumbo and www.dfwcleancities.org/charging-smart.

Air Quality Improvement Plan

NCTCOG is actively working to improve air quality through the DFW Air Quality Improvement Plan. This comprehensive plan outlines strategies and measures to enhance air quality, protect public health and reduce impacts of extreme weather events across multiple sectors. NCTCOG is collaborating with local governments on ways to reduce greenhouse gases and criteria air pollutants, including ozone and particulate matter. To learn more, visit the [DFW Air Quality Improvement Plan page](#).

Air quality funding

NCTCOG secures and manages various funding sources dedicated to air quality improvement projects in the region. These funds support initiatives such as clean energy and energy efficiency projects, fleet vehicles and alternative fuel infrastructure projects and public education campaigns. For more information, visit the [NCTCOG Air Quality Funding and Resources page](#).