

9-30-03 DRAFT

Template Talking Points for Regions

Heart disease claims millions of lives. Asthma impairs the health of so many children and adults. Air pollution, especially pollution from particles, aggravates heart disease. And it's damaging for older adults, and children.

Currently the AQI forecasts are used primarily for ground-level ozone during the summer. The expanded AQI forecasts will include daily reports for particle pollution and will be available year-round.

It is the microscopic particles suspended in the air that are of most concern. These particles can get deep into the lungs and cause significant health problems.

With the October 1 addition of particle pollution reporting and forecasting, the expanded AQI forecasts will become one of the most effective ways for Americans to manage their health year-round.

By spending just a minute each day checking the AQI forecast along with the daily weathercast, the public can know when to make simple changes to reduce their exposure to air pollution.

Ongoing support of the year-round AQI forecasts by the media and meteorologists will generate awareness of the serious health threat of particle pollution.

All local and regional meteorologists should include the expanded AQI forecasts in their daily weathercasts. For more real-time information on air quality, go to our Web site at [enter state or local Web site] or EPA's Web site at www.epa.gov/airnow.

The expanded Air Quality Index is now a "forecast to breathe by" and an even better way for people to manage their health year-round.