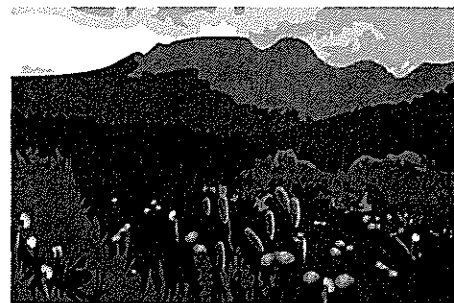


# Support Healthy Air in Sublette County

Help the Citizens' Ozone Petition with a letter to the EQC



## **What is the Citizens' Ozone Petition?**

Clean air is an important Wyoming value, and Pinedale-area citizens are requesting that Wyoming clean up ozone pollution in Sublette County to a level experts believe is safe for communities and children. The petition was filed with the Wyoming Environmental Quality Council because the current level of allowable ozone pollution set by the federal government does not protect public health.

## **Who is behind this petition?**

The petition was filed by members of Citizens United for Responsible Energy Development or CURED, the Upper Green River Valley Coalition, and several individuals. These are regular citizens, including mothers, fathers, grandparents, educators and others who live in Sublette County. The town of Pinedale backs this effort and adopted a resolution supporting the petition. Individuals in the local medical community, including doctors and nurses, also support the petition.

## **What do other health organizations think?**

The health threats associated with the current federal ozone standard are well documented. Citizens most at risk include children, the elderly, asthmatics, people who work or recreate outside, and those with preexisting lung or respiratory ailments. For this reason more than 100 scientists and medical doctors, the American Lung Association, the EPA Children's Health Protection Advisory Committee, the American Thoracic Society, the American Public Health Association and even the American Medical Association have also recommended the ozone standard be strengthened beyond the current national standard.

## **How will this petition protect public health?**

Wyoming has the ability to improve air quality beyond what the federal government requires. Citizens are petitioning Wyoming's Environmental Quality Council because the state of Wyoming has the authority to set more stringent air standards. The current federal standard for ozone is 75 parts per billion (ppb). The petition asks for a standard of 65 ppb.

## **What is wrong with the current ozone standard?**

There is overwhelming scientific and medical evidence that the current national standard does not protect people's health. The federal government, acting through the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), revised the ozone

standard last year. Unfortunately, the agency did not follow

the advice of its own scientists, the Clean Air Scientific Advisory Committee. This committee of scientists brings to bear the strongest possible scientific and medical credentials and it *unanimously* advised a range of 60 to 70 ppb.

## **Given the overwhelming evidence won't the federal government fix this?**

The federal government dropped the ball when it ignored its own scientific advisors. Although the new administration is looking into this issue, Wyoming should not wait for the feds to get it right when the health of its citizens in Sublette County is at stake.

## **How bad is ozone pollution in Sublette County?**

High levels of ozone pollution have been observed in Sublette County ever since ozone monitors were installed in 2005. Wyoming's Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) was forced to issue its first-ever public health advisories during the winter of 2008, warning people of the threats of high ozone levels in the Pinedale area. A total of five advisories were issued, and at one point the 8-hour average ozone level exceeded 120 parts per billion, a level not often seen even in polluted urban cities such as Denver and Los Angeles.

## **Where does the ozone come from?**

Ozone is formed from other chemicals, principally oxides of nitrogen (NOx) and volatile organic compounds (VOCs). The Wyoming DEQ has confirmed these 'precursors' come from the massive oil and gas development in this area. When coupled with near-complete snow cover, low winds, and temperature inversions, these precursors are cooked by the sun to form unhealthy levels of ozone pollution.

## **Will the requested standard harm the oil and gas industry?**

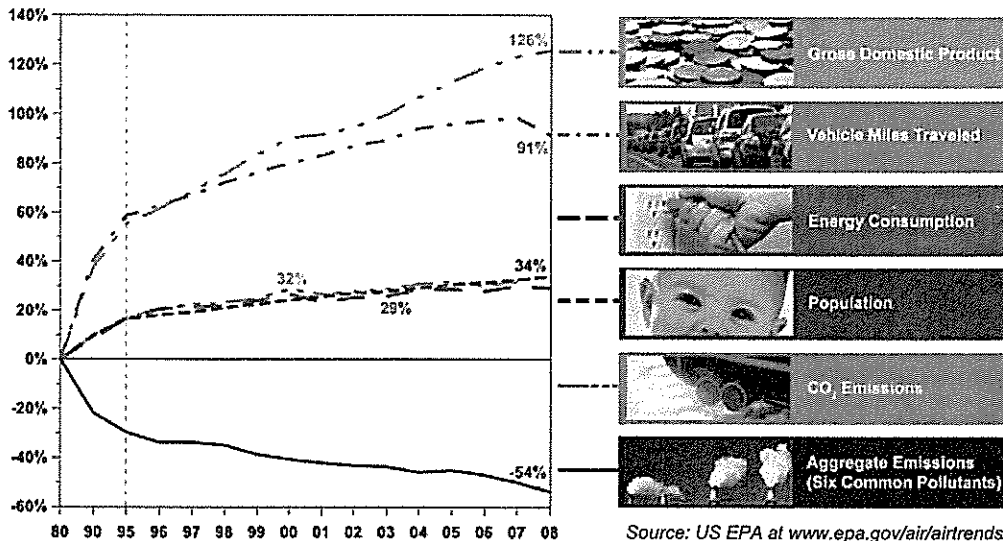
Not likely. The oil and gas industry is already implementing technology to address the ozone problem. Also, because Sublette County is recommended for "non-attainment" for ozone pollution due to exceedence of current federal standards, the DEQ will already have to require substantial ozone regulation. **Now is the time to**

### set the right target to protect public health.

Aiming for a healthy air target won't require much more than what is already happening. Further, history shows that industry is very good at adapting with new technology. (See the chart below that shows that cleaning up our air does not hurt economic growth.) Canada, like Wyoming, has a very robust energy industry but they operate under the cleaner ozone standard of 65 ppb.

### Has Wyoming ever done anything like this before?

Yes, Wyoming has a history of leadership in issues related to air pollution and questioning federal regulations. Three decades ago, when the federal government set a sulfur dioxide standard that was too weak, Wyoming took the lead in protecting its citizens by making the state's standard for the pollutant more stringent than the federal standard. This has not stifled industry in our state.



Source: US EPA at [www.epa.gov/air/airtrends/aqtrends.html#comparison](http://www.epa.gov/air/airtrends/aqtrends.html#comparison)

### Comparison of Economic Growth Values and Pollution Emissions, 1980-2008

In the US, we have a successful history of reducing air pollutants while at the same time enjoying tremendous economic growth.

### How can I help?

Wyoming's Environmental Quality Council (EQC) will make a decision soon about whether this petition has merit. **They need to hear from you** that clean, healthy air is of vital importance to our state. Although the science is clear about the serious negative health impacts of too much ozone pollution, **Wyoming's decision-makers still need to hear that you support a strong, protective standard.** This is not a choice between clean air and economic development—we can have both as a win-win for Wyoming. Workable solutions to lowering ozone emissions are within our reach if we continue to carefully regulate pollution from the oil and gas industry.

**Please write** a letter to the EQC by August 18, 2009. Send Governor Freudenthal a copy if you can. You can also attend the EQC meeting in person in Casper on August 18<sup>th</sup> to speak or to show your support (time & place to be announced).

It also helps to write letters to your local papers and the Casper Star-Tribune. Write to:

Environmental Quality Council, Docket #09-1101  
122 W. 25<sup>th</sup> St., Herschler Bldg., Rm. 1714  
Cheyenne, WY 82002

Governor Dave Freudenthal  
State Capitol  
Cheyenne, WY 82002.

**Tell them** citizens standing up to protect our communities and our health is a Wyoming way of life. And clean air is a Wyoming value we should always cherish. Our state needs to take the lead on ozone!

**For more information** contact

Citizens United for Responsible Energy  
Development, P.O. Box 28 Pinedale, WY 82941--  
307-367-4309

or  
Upper Green River Valley Coalition -- 307-367-3670