



AIR QUALITY ACTION DAY FOR FINE PARTICLES (PM 2.5)

The level of fine particles (PM_{2.5}) in the air for Fort Wayne and Allen County has been forecasted to be **Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups** on **Saturday, Feb. 20, 2010**.

Children, the elderly and people with heart or lung disease should limit or avoid prolonged outdoor exertion while the PM_{2.5} Air Quality Action Day is in effect. Try to reschedule exercise and other outdoor activities until after the forecast expires or move them indoors. Use an indoor air filter if one is available. If breathing becomes difficult, go indoors and contact your health care provider.

PM_{2.5} is composed of microscopic dust, soot, liquid droplets and smoke particles that are 2.5 microns or smaller. A human hair is 75 microns wide. PM_{2.5} deposits itself deep into lungs and cannot be easily exhaled. Those at risk are particularly vulnerable after several days of high PM_{2.5} exposure. Stagnant weather conditions reduce the natural cycling process of the atmosphere and can lead to elevated levels of PM_{2.5}.

To reduce PM_{2.5}, everyone should:

- Carpool or use public transportation.
- When driving, walk inside instead of using the drive-through, combine errands into one trip, and turn off your engine when idling for more than 10 seconds
- Drive slowly on dirt or gravel roads.
- Avoid using gas-powered equipment.
- Turn off appliances and lights when not in use

For more information, visit the IDEM Smog Watch Web site at www.in.gov/apps/idem/smog or call 1-800-631-2871. Or please visit the Clean Air Force at www.thecleanairforce.org.