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COGA members working to reduce summertime ozone through voluntary initiative

DENVER — June 4, 2018 — The oil and natural gas industry in Colorado continues to reduce emissions and mitigate the effects of ground-level ozone as part of its ongoing commitment to being good stewards of our natural resources and protecting the environment.

Over the past six years, the state's oil and gas industry nearly halved its emissions of Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs) in the Denver Metro/North Front Range (DMNFR) ozone nonattainment area, all while oil production quadrupled statewide.

"Despite the air pollution challenges associated with increasing population, our ozone levels have improved over time," according to the [Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment \(CDPHE\)](#).

To further assist with this critical challenge, a number of Colorado Oil & Gas Association (COGA) member companies operating within the nonattainment area are participating in a voluntary industry program during the 2018 peak-ozone season.

"Our producers and midstream companies are working overtime to employ measures to reduce the number of ozone exceedance days this summer. Multiple industries would be impacted if the DMNFR is reclassified from a "moderate" to a "serious" ozone nonattainment area. A serious designation would be bad for business in Colorado and interrupt the progress the state is already making toward cleaner air, so while we can't do it alone, we want to do our part," said Dan Haley, President & CEO of COGA.

Ozone is a secondary pollutant formed when VOCs and nitrogen oxides (NOx) combine in the presence of sunlight and heat, according to the Regional Air Quality Council ([RAQC](#)). "Weather plays a key role in ozone formation. The highest ozone levels are usually recorded in summer months when temperatures approach the high 80s and 90s and the wind is stagnant or light."

A vast majority of ozone levels in the DMNFR nonattainment area, about 65 to 75 percent, qualify as background ozone, according to the RAQC. Background ozone is

formed by a combination of naturally occurring emissions and ozone that is transported to the Front Range from international and other domestic sources.

While air quality continues to improve, the DMNFR area has not yet complied with the 2008 EPA ozone standard of 75 parts per billion over an 8-hour average, and it remains in moderate nonattainment status.

The voluntary industry program will run from June 1 to September 30 and consists of a suite of voluntary emissions reduction measures during forecasted high-ozone days. Possible ozone mitigation activities include but are not limited to the following:

- Alternate vehicle fueling times
- Reduced vehicle traffic and miles traveled
- Managed drilling and completions on high ozone days to reduce emissions
- Lower emitting tank load outs
- Delayed operational activities (e.g., pigging, well unloadings) on high ozone days
- Additional aerial surveys to detect and fix leaks

It is important to note that background ozone levels are highest in the western United States and are caused by other domestic and international sources. Consequently, addressing ozone related challenges in Colorado is an extremely difficult, economy-wide undertaking, as only 25 to 35 percent of the emissions needed to form ozone in the nonattainment area are actually produced by Colorado-based human activity. These activities include but are not limited to cars, boats, planes, tractors, as well as industrial plants, lawn and garden equipment, and even household products like paints, solvents, and hair spray.

“Colorado’s oil and gas industry has seen significant reductions of ozone-causing emissions in recent years,” Haley said. “That’s due to technological innovation, regulatory initiatives currently on the books, and leadership from our industry.”

Resources are available at <http://www.factsonceo.org/> to give the public and policymakers a deeper look at the ozone issue in Colorado. COGA is also promoting the efforts of *Simple Steps. Better Air*, the public education initiative by the Regional Air Quality Council (RAQC).

Follow @factsonCEO on Twitter and Facebook for the latest updates on industry efforts and to find resources on air quality in Colorado.

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About COGA

Founded in 1984, the Colorado Oil & Gas Association’s (COGA) mission is to foster and promote the beneficial, efficient, responsible and environmentally sound development, production and use of Colorado oil and natural gas. COGA is a nationally recognized trade association that aggressively promotes the expansion of Rocky Mountain natural gas markets, supply, and transportation infrastructure through its growing and diverse membership.