

Vehicle Emissions Fact Sheet



How do vehicles pollute the air?

- The Greater Vancouver Regional District's Air Quality Management Plan states that light-duty vehicles continue to be the single largest source of air pollution (54%) in the region.
- Motor vehicles emit carbon monoxide (CO), hydrocarbons (HC), oxides of nitrogen (NOx), and particulate matter into our air every day.
- Emissions from light-duty vehicles will remain the largest contributor to smog-forming and carbon monoxide emissions until at least 2010.
- There are an estimated 1.3 million light-duty cars and trucks operating in the Lower Fraser Valley.

The BC I/M Program (AirCare)

The Lower Mainland vehicle inspection program, known as AirCare, is the single largest emissions reduction measure within the Greater Vancouver Regional District's Air Quality Management Plan (AQMP).

The GVRD's AQMP identifies vehicle emissions testing as an important way to effectively reduce emissions from light-duty vehicles.

AirCare identifies 80,000 high polluting vehicles each year and ensures proper repairs are completed.

Effective repairs reduce the emissions output of these failing vehicles by about 70%.

In its first 12 years, AirCare is credited with reducing vehicle emissions by 29%.

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- People drive more kilometres and more vehicles today than ever before – offsetting the potential gains of new technology intended to make vehicle emissions cleaner. Motorists drive an average of 45 kilometres per day and 18,000 kilometres per year.

How do vehicle emissions harm human health and the environment?

- Since the 1970s, studies have consistently shown that the current level of air pollution has a negative impact on human health and the environment.
- According to a study in 2000 by the Canadian Institute for Child Health, asthma attacks are the leading cause of childhood hospital visits in Canada. Air pollution is a trigger for these asthma attacks.
- Air pollution irritates the eyes, nose and throat; air pollution causes wheezing, coughing, and breathing difficulties, worsens existing heart and lung problems, and increases the risk of heart attacks.
- Improving air quality through vehicle emissions testing preserves human health and reduces the risk to children with asthma, the elderly, people who work or exercise outdoors, and people with other respiratory problems or heart conditions.

What is a vehicle emission inspection and maintenance (I/M) program?

- I/M programs reduce harmful vehicle emissions by identifying light-duty cars and trucks that are polluting the air and ensuring these vehicles are repaired.
- According to the GVRD's Air Quality Management Plan, I/M programs are the most effective way of reducing emissions from vehicles.

Source: AirCare Program, Greater Vancouver Regional District, the British Columbia Lung Association, and the Canadian Institute for Child Health