

# NEWS RELEASE

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## 2006 RUN FOR CLEAN AIR ABOUT EDUCATING PUBLIC Local Action is Required to Improve East Tennessee's Air Quality

Knoxville, TN - This Saturday, April 8, the 3<sup>rd</sup> annual Run for Clean Air will take place in Sequoyah Hills. The event will educate East Tennesseans on the state of air quality in our area, and options for what can be done to improve it.

The EPA enacted lower-threshold standards for smog-causing ozone and haze-forming particulate matter (PM) two years ago in an effort to better protect the public from airborne, pollutant-based diseases including lung disease, heart disease and asthma. Eighty percent of the counties in Tennessee that are not meeting the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA's) health-based standards for ozone and PM are in East Tennessee, with the vast majority of those counties being in central East Tennessee (Knox and surrounding counties). "The air in East Tennessee needs action by local citizens to improve and to meet the EPA's standards. There are many opportunities out there now that government, businesses and individuals can take advantage of, such as using biodiesel which emits fewer pollutants," said Jonathan Overly, executive director of the East Tennessee Clean Fuels Coalition.

The public can participate in helping reduce local-sourced pollution through transportation-related initiatives. Using alternative methods of transportation (in lieu of a car or truck) like walking, biking, carpooling or ridesharing, or using mass transit are great options that significantly reduce transportation-based pollution. Other options include using alternative fuels, trip chaining, not idling your vehicle, refueling during the evening, keeping your car well tuned and conserving electricity (or any type of energy for that matter).

"When action is taken to improve local air quality, it also helps reduce our global warming pollution. The more efficiently we use energy, including vehicle fuel, the less air pollution and global warming pollution goes into our atmosphere," said Emily Saunders, climate and air program coordinator for the Southern Alliance for Clean Energy, co-host for the Run for Clean Air. Most global warming pollution in East Tennessee comes from power plants and automobiles.

The event begins with onsite registration at 8am at the southwest end of Cherokee Boulevard. There is plenty of parking. About 20 AFVs (alternative fuel vehicles) will be on display throughout the event spanning the following alternative fuels: biodiesel, electricity, ethanol, natural gas and propane. Several different types of hybrid vehicles will be on display as well. There will be a Toyota hybrid vehicle "Ride-n-Drive" after the run with two Prius and two hybrid Highlanders. There will be multiple displays discussing air quality in East Tennessee and a clean air question and answer session to help relay accurate and factual information to participants about air quality in Tennessee. Participants get a chance to win some fantastic prizes including matted 18" x 20" Jim Gray prints, running shoes, solar-powered headsets and color-changing fun spheres, DVD sets and products from the Great Smoky Mountains National Park like fleece pullovers and trail, tree and bird books.

Counties not meeting the 8-hour ozone standard are Knox, Blount, Sevier, Anderson, Loudon, Jefferson and a portion of Cocke; counties not meeting the PM-2.5 (PM 2.5 microns in diameter and less) are Knox, Blount, Anderson, Loudon and a portion of Roane. In addition, three other counties—Hawkins, Sullivan and Hamilton—are participating in the Early Action Compact for the ozone standard, a chance to not be encumbered with the "nonattainment" label. Knox and surrounding counties are the center of nonattainment in Tennessee! Citizens can take action to help improve air quality in Knoxville and surrounding counties. Participating in the Run for Clean Air can help you get started.

For more information, visit [www.RunforCleanAir.org](http://www.RunforCleanAir.org). The 2006 Run for Clean Air is hosted by the East Tennessee Clean Fuels Coalition and the Southern Alliance for Clean Energy.