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ADEM to Resume Air Quality Forecasting in Mobile

The Alabama Department of Environmental Management will resume issuing air quality forecasts for the Mobile/Baldwin County area on April 15. The Department has provided air quality forecasts for the Mobile area for more than 10 years and ADEM meteorologists will again provide these daily forecasts throughout the spring to early fall of 2010. The forecasts are designed to help the area achieve and maintain compliance with the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for ozone and to allow citizens to make informed decisions about their daily outdoor activities.

ADEM prepares the forecasts by assessing weather patterns, evaluating computer models, and observing climate trends. Forecasts will be issued Sunday through Friday and will provide a prediction of the ozone levels for the following day. The forecasts issued on Friday will cover the following two or three days. Also, the forecasts consist of color-coded categories based on the Air Quality Index (AQI) that reflects expected ozone levels and recommend actions. Forecasts are provided to the local news media and are also available at www.adem.alabama.gov.

If necessary, air quality “Alerts” will be issued when conditions favor the development of air pollutant concentrations that meet or surpass the national standards. Alerts inform the public about recommended changes in daily activities to help reduce health impacts. The alerts are especially helpful to sensitive groups such as young children, the elderly, or individuals with respiratory problems.

ADEM encourages voluntary efforts, and offers helpful information, to help reduce the formation of ground-level ozone. These voluntary efforts include operating outdoor power equipment less frequently, utilizing public transportation, carpooling, converting to compact florescent lights, and using energy-efficient appliances.

Forecasts can be received directly via e-mail through the EPA EnviroFlash Program which allows citizens to customize their forecasts free of charge. Additional information on how to sign up for EnviroFlash Program can be found at www.enviroflash.info/.

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