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# Good News Department

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## Smog Warnings Lifting

(NAPSA)—Even though Americans are driving more miles and using more energy than ever before, ozone levels in most geographic areas of the country have dropped over the past 20 years, according to a new report by the US Environmental Protection Agency.



Ground-level ozone, or as it is commonly called, smog, can pose health challenges for people with respiratory diseases such as asthma, as well as for those who strenuously exert themselves outdoors. Ozone forms on hot summer days when volatile organic compounds—fumes from solvents and other chemicals—react with nitrogen oxides (NOx) emissions from automobiles, power plants, and other sources.

Across the country, EPA monitors ozone levels for one- and eight-hour periods each day from May through September. Since 1983, results from these EPA tests show that ozone levels have dropped 22 percent based on the one-hour data, and 14 percent based on the eight-hour data.

Cleaner power plants have contributed to the drop in ozone levels, according to Edison Electric Institute. In 2004, NOx emissions from power plants will have fallen 40 percent from 1980 emission levels. For more information, visit [www.eei.org](http://www.eei.org).