

ALLEN BEALS, M.D., J.D.
Commissioner of Health



MARYELLEN ODELL
County Executive

ROBERT MORRIS, P.E.
Director of Environmental Health

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

1 Geneva Road, Brewster, New York 10509

Phone # (845) 808-1390

Fax # (845) 278-7921

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Contact: Kris Boyle, Public Information Officer
Phone: 845-808-1390

Ozone Health Advisory for Putnam County Residents

Brewster, NY - The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation issued an air quality health advisory today concerning high levels of ozone in the atmosphere. Ozone is a toxic air pollutant that is a health concern particularly when outdoor levels are high. Short-term ozone exposure has been linked to adverse effects such as eye, nose and throat irritation and decreased lung function, especially in those engaging in outdoor exercise.

Putnam County's Health Commissioner, Allen Beals, M.D., warns "current conditions are especially unhealthy for certain groups of individuals such as young children, the elderly, people with pre-existing lung disease such as asthma, and those with heart disease or high blood pressure." Dr. Beals goes on to caution that "everyone should limit their time outdoors doing strenuous physical activities when ozone levels are elevated."

If you must be outdoors, individuals can reduce their exposure and risk for problems by scheduling outdoor activities during the morning hours when ozone levels are generally lower.

The Health Department's mission is to improve and protect the health of Putnam County residents through prevention of illness and injury. For more information about air quality forecasts, visit http://www.dec.ny.gov/cfm/xtapps/aqi/aqi_forecast.cfm or call the Putnam County Department of Health at (845) 808-1390.

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