FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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CLEAN AIR PROMOTES GOOD HEALTH IN FLORIDA

TALLAHASSEE—This is Air Quality Awareness Week, a chance to appreciate the clean air we are surrounded by in the Sunshine State. The high air quality standards in the state decrease the prevalence of health concerns for residents and visitors. They also make heading outside to get moving and maintain a healthy weight easy—there's no time like the present to begin your journey to better health.

"Take a deep breath of fresh Florida air—clean air is good for everyone's health," said State Surgeon General and Secretary of Health Dr. John Armstrong. "Air quality matters for the well-being of Florida's children, adults, families, and visitors."

For the past five years, the department has worked closely with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and the Environmental Protection Agency to track outdoor air quality to better understand the impact air pollution has on our health. One tool used is the Florida Air Quality System, which provides up-to-date pollution data to the public. Florida's air monitoring network currently evaluates air quality for 92 percent of the state's population and ranks as one of the strongest among Southeastern states.

For Floridians living with respiratory issues such as asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, low air quality can determine one's ability to perform daily tasks. It can also be harmful to heart health according to the CDC.

There are many steps Floridians can take to help prevent air pollution and protect human health, as well as the environment. These steps include:

* Drive less—plan to use public transportation, carpool or ride a bike;

* Drive smart—check the Florida Department of Transportation's 511 Traveler Information Service before hitting the road;

* Request a home energy audit by the local utility company, and use energy-efficient products;

* Use reel or electric lawn mowers and electric leaf blowers;

* Compost rather than burning waste materials;

- Use green cleaners around the house;

- Maintain heating and air conditioning units;

- Reduce waste, reuse and recycle disposable items;

- Plant native trees and shrubs; and

- Help to spread the word.

Visit Florida Environmental Public Health Tracking to learn more about how air quality affects you, your family and your community.

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The department works to protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts.

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