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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Air Quality Alert Issued for July 19 in Central Ohio Air Pollution Levels Expected to be Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups

(COLUMBUS – July 18, 2017) – The Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC) is issuing an Air Quality Alert for Wednesday, July 19. The region – Delaware, Fairfield, Franklin, Knox, Madison, and Licking counties – is likely to experience ground-level ozone pollution levels that are Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups on the national Air Quality Index (AQI) scale. Wednesday’s AQI is forecasted to be 101.

Warm temperatures and mostly sunny skies will enhance ozone formation. In the morning, calm winds will limit pollutant dispersion and light west-southwesterly winds during midday hours will bring additional pollutants to the region. Furthermore, pollutant carryover from previous days will be high. These conditions will lead to Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups AQI levels. This is the fifth alert in 2017.

MORPC uses the national AQI scale to inform the public about daily ozone and particle pollution levels in Central Ohio. The AQI scale runs from 0-300 – the higher the AQI value, the greater the health concern. When levels reach above 100, air quality is considered to be Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups and MORPC issues an Air Quality Alert to the public.

Active children, the elderly, and people with asthma and COPD are more likely to suffer an increase in the number and severity of symptoms during an Air Quality Alert. To decrease the potential for health issues, sensitive groups of people are urged to limit prolonged outdoor activity or plan outdoor activities for the morning. Those who are experiencing breathing difficulties should consult with their doctor. More information on the health effects of ozone pollution is available at <http://www.myfcph.org/air.php> and <https://www.columbus.gov/publichealth/programs/Air-Quality/>.

On Air Quality Alert days, MORPC recommends taking actions to improve air quality. MORPC recommends carpooling, combining trips, riding COTA, and bicycling or walking if possible. More information about transportation options can be found online at <http://gohiocommute.com> or contact MORPC at 1.888.742.RIDE (7433) for more information. When everyone pitches in, our communities breathe better air.

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Working to Build a Better Region

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- Turn off your engine instead of idling your vehicle to cut down on vehicle emissions.
- Avoid refueling your vehicle, or wait until dusk to refuel your vehicle. Filling up your tank when the daytime heat has diminished helps to reduce harmful ground-level ozone pollution.
- Avoid topping off your tank at the gas station. Spilled gasoline pollutes the air when it evaporates.
- Avoid mowing your lawn on an Air Quality Alert day. Longer grass in your yard is good for the air, as well as the lawn.

Visit <http://airquality.morpc.org> for more information about MORPC's Air Quality Program. Call MORPC's toll-free hotline for the latest air quality forecast at 1-888-666-1009. English and Spanish options are available.

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The Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC) is a voluntary association of local governments and regional organizations which envisions and embraces innovative directions in economic prosperity, energy, the environment, housing, land use, and transportation. Our transformative programming, services and innovative public policy are designed to promote and support the vitality and growth in the region.