Air Quality Outreach Materials

Air Quality Communication Workshop

San Salvador, El Salvador

April 16-17, 2012

Who Uses Air Quality Information?

- Public:
  - Make decisions about reducing exposure to atmospheric pollutants
  - Take action to reduce pollutant emissions
- Media:
  - Publicize air quality events
  - Provide general information on air quality and health
- Government Officials:
  - Make decisions about protecting public health
  - Communicate health messages
  - Develop regulations to reduce pollutant emissions

Communicating Air Quality Information

- Air quality information should be clear, concise, and consistent
- Use the AQI to communicate pollutant concentrations
- Use non-technical terms for clear understanding
- Make health messages concise and direct
- Standardize health messages and tips for consistency
- Educate the public, media, and government officials on air quality issues so they are prepared when events occur

Common Questions from the Media

- What is air quality?
- Why is air quality important?
- How does air quality affect people?
- What are the common pollutants in our area?
- Where can the media find air quality information?
- What can people do to protect their health during an air quality event?
- Are air quality measurements accurate?
- How should the media communicate air quality information to the public?
- What can people do to reduce air pollution?

Common Questions from Government Officials

- What are the health effects of exposure to particle pollution?
  - Chronic (long-term) exposure (e.g., years)
  - Acute (short-term) exposure (e.g., hours to days)
- Who is at risk from exposure to particle pollution?
- What can people do to protect themselves when particle pollution is high?
- What can people do to reduce particle pollution…
  - every day?
  - when PM concentrations are high?
- Where can people find particle pollution concentrations for our city/country?

Working with the Government and Media

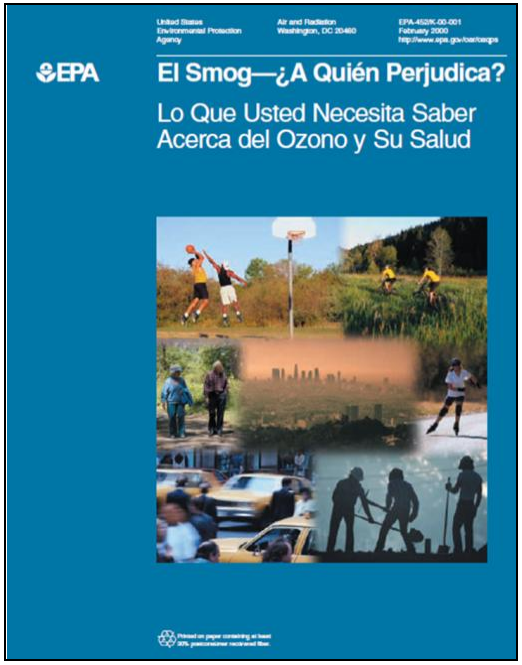
- Establish a relationship:
  - Visit government officials and travel to media outlets (e.g., TV stations, newspapers)
  - Provide information in advance of air quality events
  - Be proactive
- Provide materials for communicating air quality information that are:
  - Easy-to-use
  - Customized
  - Informative
- Make air quality information relevant to current events, interests, etc.

Air Quality Outreach Materials

- Create and distribute a variety of outreach materials
- Choose appropriate materials based on:
  - Cost
  - Usability
  - Longevity
  - Target market
  - Production time
  - Need for internet
  - Amount of time viewers will have to see it
  - Method of distribution
- Offer a range of materials
  - Not everyone learns in the same way
  - Different materials will reach different audiences

Contents of Published Materials

- Explain why air quality information is important (i.e., how pollution affects the public)
- Sources of air pollution
- Ways the public can change their behavior to reduce emissions
- Clear, practical health tips
- Simple, standardized health messages



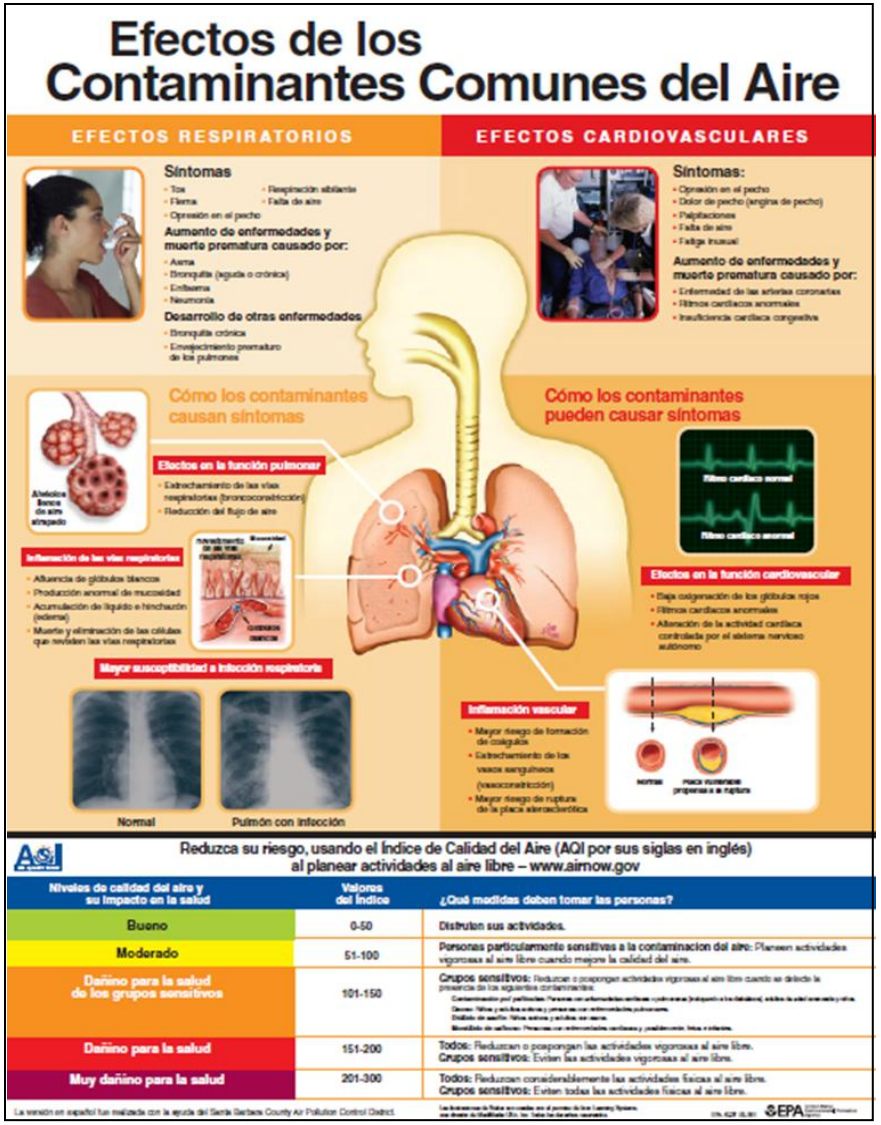
Posters

Advantages:

- Visually interesting
- Contain a lot of information
- Can be placed on buses, on trains, in health clinics, and in public service offices

Disadvantages:

- Reach a relatively limited audience
- Take time to produce



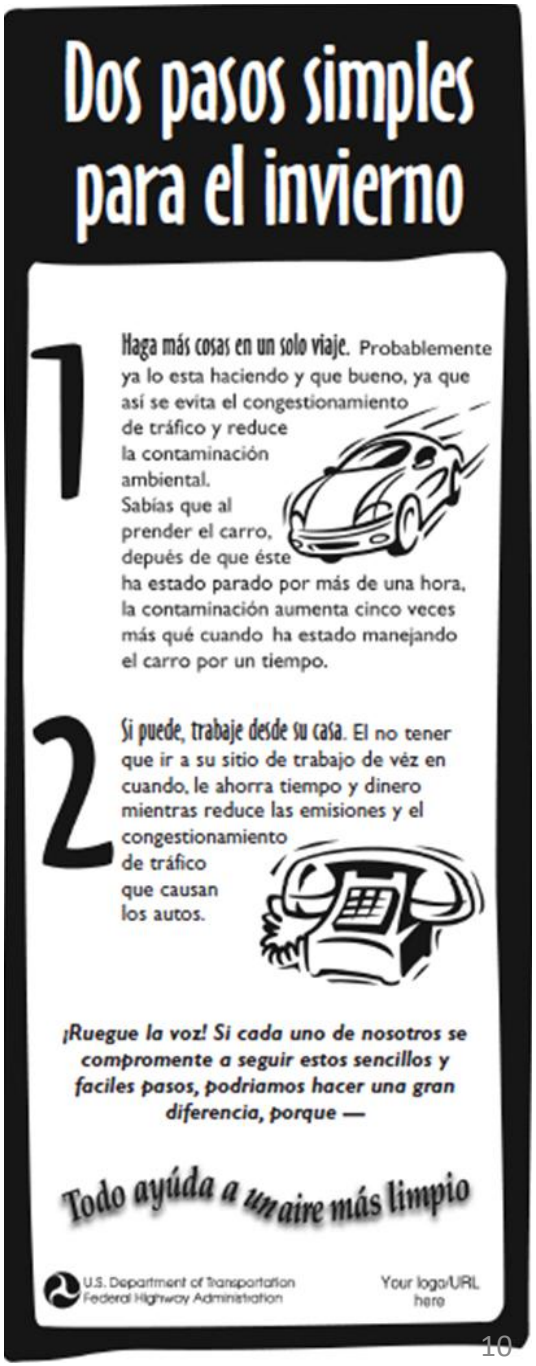
Flyers

Advantages:

- Small enough to hand out at community events
- Relatively inexpensive and easy to produce

Disadvantages:

- Reach a very limited audience



Video/TV

Advantages:

- Engaging and visual
- Reach a large audience

Disadvantages:

- Can be expensive to produce and run on TV
- Require considerable production time

Example of air quality video

Radio

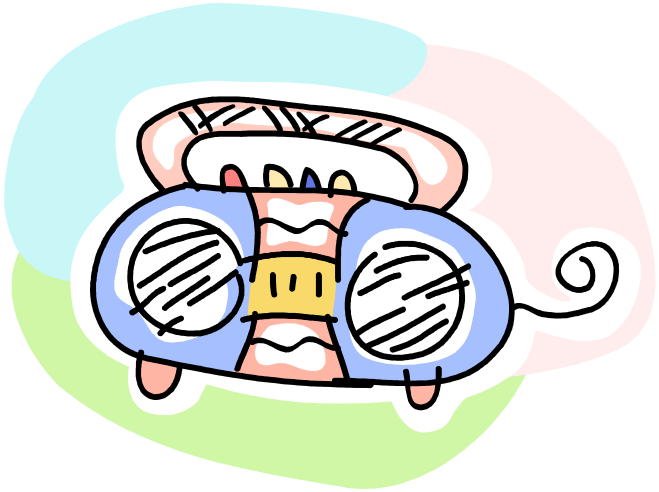
Advantages:

- Inexpensive to produce
- Reach a large audience

Disadvantages:

- No visual component

Example of air quality radio announcement



Billboards

Advantages:

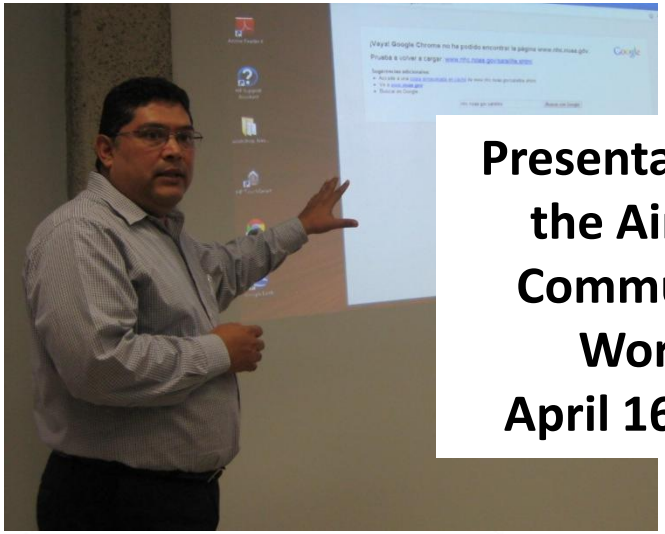
- Reach a large audience, including those without television and radio access

Disadvantages:

- May be expensive to produce

Outreach Materials on MARN Website

www.servirglobal.net



Presentations from the Air Quality Communication Workshop April 16-17, 2012

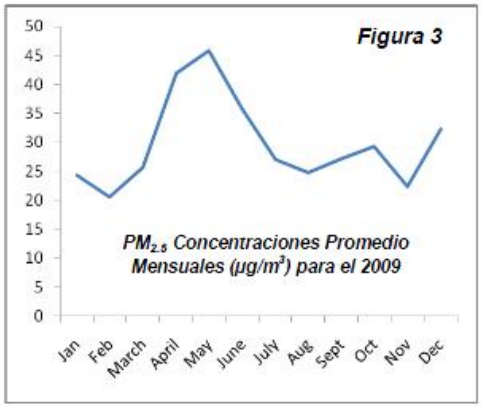
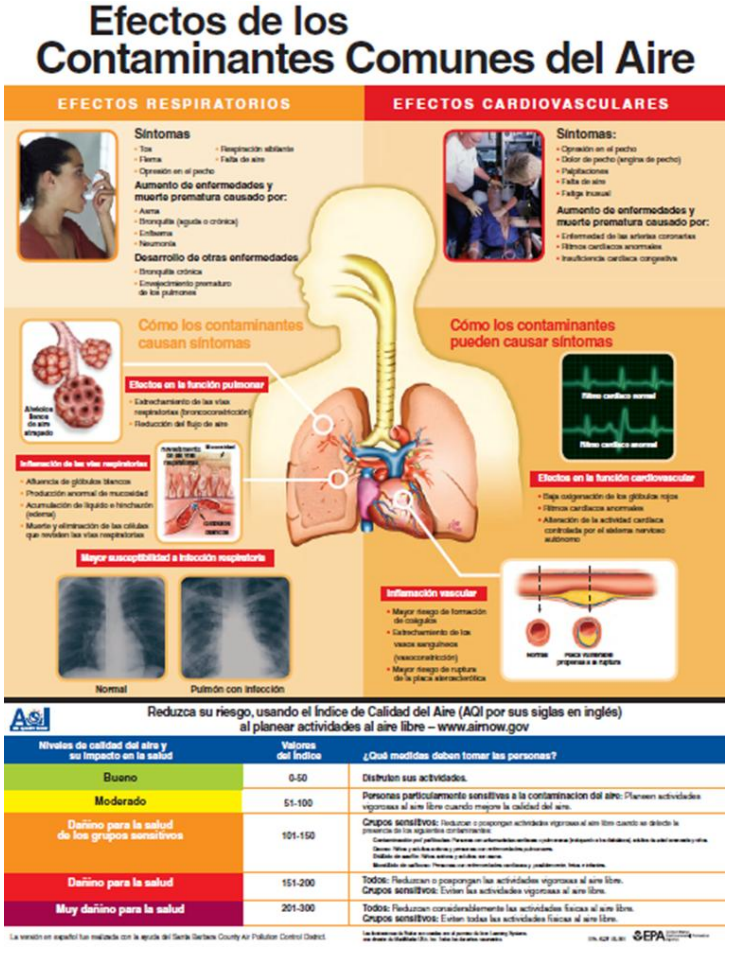


Figura 3. Concentración ambiental promedio mensual de $PM_{2.5}$ ($\mu g/m^3$) medida por dos monitores continuos en San Salvador, El Salvador, durante el 2009. Los niveles de $PM_{2.5}$ en la región generalmente son más elevados en abril y mayo, coincidiendo con las altas concentraciones producto de quemas agrícolas y la ausencia de lluvias que "lavan" los contaminantes del aire durante el invierno.
Datos cortesía del Ministerio de Medio Ambiente y Recursos Naturales (MARN), El Salvador.

Figura 4: Los autobuses y camiones comerciales producen aproximadamente el 75% del total de emisiones de PM_{10} por fuentes móviles en San Salvador y contribuyen significativamente a los niveles ambientales de $PM_{2.5}$ y NO_2 en las zonas urbanas como San Salvador.
Cortesía del MARN y del Diagnóstico de la Calidad del Aire: Levantamiento del Inventario de Emisiones y Diseño de la Red de Monitoreo (2006).



Sample Air Quality Outreach Materials

Methods of Reaching the Public

- Media
  - Television/radio/newspapers
  - News anchors and weathercasters
- Events
  - Distribute flyers and other print materials
  - Improve awareness through outreach activities

- Schools
  - Children as a group are particularly sensitive to air pollution
  - Children are likely to share what they learn with their parents
- City/national/regional websites

SIMAT Website Children's Section (Mexico City)

Summary

- There are a variety of different types of people who use air quality information, and they use the information for different purposes
- Air quality information disseminated to users should be clear, concise, and consistent
- Education is key to public understanding
- Involve the media to educate the public and government officials
- Use a variety of different outreach materials for education and data dissemination:
  - Posters, flyers, billboards
  - Television and radio
  - Websites