

## **Air Quality Awareness Week**

**WHEREAS**, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has designated May 6-10, 2024 as National Air Quality Awareness Week and the theme this year is “Knowing your Air”; and

**WHEREAS**, Air Quality continues to improve in Buncombe County with ground level ozone and fine particle levels down 18 and 48 percent since 2000; and

**WHEREAS**, the Asheville-Buncombe Air Quality Agency actively monitors ground level ozone and fine particles and other measures of air quality and works with state and federal partners, businesses, and residents to ensure our air is clean; and

**WHEREAS**, the North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality provides daily county-level air quality forecasts disseminated by the online Air Quality Portal, Asheville-Buncombe Air Quality, and local media to help residents make informed choices about their outdoor activities; and

**WHEREAS**, young children and older adults are at higher risk of experiencing health-related problems from breathing ground-level ozone and particle pollution; and

**WHEREAS**, outdoor visibility has improved since 2000, with visibility on our haziest days improving by more than 30 miles; and

**WHEREAS**, local governments in Buncombe County have been leaders in clean air management, adopting and implementing smoke and air pollution ordinances as early as 1916 and 1947 respectively, to address air pollution challenges related to the topography, meteorology, and associated temperature inversions, and population growth, while recognizing the importance of clean air in this thriving economy; and

**WHEREAS**, Buncombe County and the City of Asheville have determined that it is in their mutual best interest to establish a regional air quality program and have entered into an interlocal agreement pursuant to North Carolina General Statute to create the Asheville-Buncombe Air Quality Agency for the purpose of developing and administering an air quality program in their respective jurisdictions; and

**WHEREAS**, Buncombe County’s strategic plan includes a vision of “high quality air, water, farmland and renewable energy for future generations” and the County has set a goal of reaching 100% renewable energy for County operations by 2030 and for the entire community by 2042; and

**WHEREAS**, Buncombe County has adopted a sustainable fleet policy and energy efficiency standards for new County buildings to reduce pollution associated with transportation and energy sources; and

**WHEREAS**, the state continues to make progress toward reducing greenhouse gas emissions and addressing climate change as directed by executive orders; and

**WHEREAS**, North Carolina Department of Transportation’s Clean Transportation Plan will lead to further emission reductions from motor vehicles, which are the state’s leading sources of air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions; and

**WHEREAS**, Buncombe County, Asheville-Buncombe Air Quality, NCDEQ and the United States Environmental Protection Agency are supporting education and outreach efforts to encourage all residents to access and understand the Air Quality Index as a tool to protect their health and take positive actions in their daily lives to help improve air quality in their community.

**NOW THEREFORE**, be it resolved that the Buncombe County Board of Commissioners hereby proclaims **May 6-10, 2024** as **Buncombe County Air Quality Awareness Week** and encourages residents to promote air quality by taking simple steps to reduce emissions including taking fewer car trips, taking alternative forms of transportation, replacing vehicles with more fuel efficient and lower emitting technologies when possible, replacing gas powered lawn equipment with electric or battery-operated equipment, implementing energy efficiency measures at home and work, avoiding outdoor open burning when possible, and using products that emit less volatile organic compounds.

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Brownie Newman Chairman  
Buncombe County Board of Commissioners