

From: [Nancy Birkholz](#)
To: [Dec Air Comment](#)
Subject: Air Quality in Fairbanks
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I am not extremely educated on the Serious SIP as I just heard of it tonight via today's Northern Center e-mail. However, I do agree that we must seriously encourage efforts that will improve our air quality. I live by the Geist Post Office and have never had any respiratory issues. Now however, after living in this area for over 20 years, I notice myself coughing while going to my car when the air quality is less than desirable. I feel sorry for the children at University Park Elementary and Woodriver Elementary who are required to go outdoors for recess (or sometimes have to stay inside due to air quality alerts).

People have suggested that if I don't like it, I should move farther out of town as they have. To me, this makes me part of the problem. The longer the commute, the more stops and starts, the worse the air gets.

Also, living out of town is no guarantee that the air will be cleaner there. I've heard of people having to move when their neighbor burns wood and the smoke drifts in their direction. People say they have a right to burn wood, but they don't have a right to impact their neighborhood's health and quality of life.

One simple trick people can do to reduce vehicle emissions is to of course plug their car in, but also to put a sleeping bag or blanket on the hood. I do this and it might be considered "old school", but my car heats up faster and I am on my way faster. I see people at work hit the auto-start and then go back to their desks for 20 minutes. That is a lot of idling!

I am also lucky that my employer allows for flexible schedules. I avoid the Geist/University intersection and the long lines of vehicles idling on Geist every morning, by coming in a little after 8:00 am or earlier than 7:30 am. I also avoid the 4:30-6:00 pm time period if I can. This way I have an 8 minute commute vs a 15-20 min. commute, save gas and do my part to improve air quality. I am hoping that employers can be encouraged in whatever way to allow for flexible work schedules. Even altering the work start time by 15 min. can make a big difference at the University/Geist intersection.

I believe educating the community and the upcoming generation by doing presentations in the schools and anywhere else there is an opportunity is key. Hopefully, all of us can be educated and do our part. Thank you for the opportunity to comment on Fairbanks air quality.

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