



Contact: Jessica Covello  
communications 21  
404-814-1330  
[jcovello@c21pr.com](mailto:jcovello@c21pr.com)

## **VEHICLE EMISSION TESTING PROGRAM TO PREVENT 4,700 TONS OF POLLUTANTS FROM ENTERING AIR IN 2009**

**ATLANTA** – December 18, 2008 – Georgia’s Clean Air Force, which administers the state’s vehicle emission inspection and maintenance (I/M) program, is committed to working toward better air quality and better health for metro Atlantans, and expects to prevent 4,700 tons of pollutants from entering our air in 2009.

Vehicle emissions are a major contributor to metro Atlanta’s poor air quality, which affects both personal health and the environment. Studies in several large cities reveal that 60,000 deaths each year are caused by particulate matter – tiny airborne particles that are the main ingredient of haze, smoke and dust. Inhaling polluted air can result in asthma attacks, coughing, wheezing and shortness of breath, and can increase the risk of heart attack, stroke and other cardiovascular problems. In fact, studies have shown that breathing polluted air year-round can shorten life by one to three years.

To help combat air pollution, Georgia’s Clean Air Force tests an average of 2.5 million vehicles each year in metro Atlanta. The organization is doing its part to clean up the air by requiring polluting vehicles to seek repairs. Since 1996, Georgia’s Clean Air Force has cleaned up nearly 1.5 million vehicles.

“Georgia’s Clean Air Force’s 12<sup>th</sup> annual research study revealed that 43 percent of motorists who reported acceptance of the program also believe the program helps metro Atlanta’s air quality,” said Cherrise Boone, public information specialist – Georgia Environmental Protection Division. “There is still education to be done regarding the emission testing program and its associated health and environmental benefits, and we have several tools in place to increase the public’s awareness and understanding of the program, including [www.cleanairforce.com](http://www.cleanairforce.com), motorist rights posters and Q & A brochures – all of which are available in both English and Spanish.”

In addition to health and environmental benefits, maintaining one’s vehicle emissions system also can reduce fuel costs by an average of six to 13 percent, prevent costly repairs and extend the life of a vehicle.

Additional information on air pollution and its affect on personal health can be found on Georgia’s Clean Air Force’s [Web site](#).

### **About Georgia’s Clean Air Force**

Since 1996 Georgia’s Clean Air Force, the state’s Enhanced Vehicle Emission Inspection and Maintenance Program, has worked with Georgia’s Environmental Protection Division to reduce harmful vehicle emissions. Georgia’s Inspection and Maintenance Program has prevented tons of ozone-forming pollutants from the air we breathe by identifying and repairing more than 1.5 million heavy-polluting vehicles. For more information, please visit [www.cleanairforce.com](http://www.cleanairforce.com).

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