



PRESS RELEASE

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UNMASK MY CITY GLOBAL CAMPAIGN LAUNCH - SALT LAKE CITY *Health professionals push to unmask cities as global air pollution toll grows*

****Launch: May 2nd, Tuesday, 6:30 - 9:00 pm, Impact Hub, 150 State St #100, SLC, UT 84111**

****Photo Opportunity at 6:15 pm with organizers/supporters who will cycle in wearing masks (convene at the lot behind Impact Hub building)**

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May 2, 2017, Salt Lake City — On World Asthma Day, Salt Lake City organizations will be joining doctors and healthcare professionals around the world to officially launch [Unmask My City](#). This is a global initiative to rally their peers and push for action on air pollution in 10 cities. **Utah Physicians for a Healthy Environment (UPHE)** with the support of partner organizations: **Utah Climate Action Network, HEAL Utah, Utah Rivers Council, the Mormon Environmental Stewardship Alliance (MESA), PurpleAir.org and KRCL** will host a launch event titled, ***Unmask My City: Air Quality, Climate Change and Your Health*** on May 2nd, Tuesday, 6:30 - 9:00 pm at the Impact Hub in Salt Lake City.

The main goal of the event is to support solutions to reduce urban air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions. The launch features [presentations and panelists](#) who will discuss the challenges and opportunities to communicate the health impacts of air quality and climate change to the local community. There will be a gallery of photos and videos of interviews, plus food and music. The event page can be found here: <http://uphe.org/event/unmask/>

This launch is especially timely after the overwhelming response to the March for Science and People's Climate March, as well as the American Lung Association's State of the Air [report](#) that shows Salt Lake City-Provo-Orem as ranking 7th worst for short-term particle pollution and breaking in the ranking for ozone pollution (that causes serious lung damage among other effects) at #20. The event also happens to be on the eve of the Governor's Utah Energy Development Summit.

Part of this campaign launch includes the opportunity for attendees to sign an online petition that calls for better air quality through a strong state implementation plan for Utah's non-attainment areas, and more specific asks such as addressing vehicle emissions, protecting the Great Salt Lake and having better air monitoring and regulations around fugitive dust.

According to Denni Cawley, Executive Director of UPHE, "UPHE is pleased to launch this campaign in Salt Lake City as we know that doctors and health professionals are going to be important partners in communicating to the public the very real health impacts of air pollution and climate change. The conversation has to grow in our state."

"For nearly a decade Utah has failed to meet federal air quality standards, which jeopardizes our public health, environment and economy. HEAL Utah works to urge robust actions and creative solutions from our elected officials and state regulators. Now, more than ever, Utahns must unite to defend our fundamental right to clean air and a healthy environment," says Ashley Ann Soltysiak, Policy Director of HEAL Utah.

Ty Markham, Chair of the MESA Board of Directors puts forward that "We live in a defining moment. Will we step up to meet the challenge of returning our environment to one that sustains the health of all living, including our own, and those of future generations? Or will we stay complacent, allowing the forces of materialism and greed to continue overwhelming earth's ability to sustain us? As our pioneer leaders did when they entered this valley, MESA calls upon ALL who live here to become mindful stewards of our air, water and soil."

"Poor air quality can lower the chances of men and women to get pregnant, lower the chances of staying pregnant, and can decrease the health of your child-to-be," explains Dr. Kirtly Parker Jones, UPHE Board Member and Professor Emerita, Dept. of Obstetrics and Gynecology of the University of Utah. "Clean air is a choice we make for ourselves, our neighborhood, our larger community, and our future."

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A series of images for each city, video, a global fact sheet and fact sheets pertaining to each city, and a campaign backgrounder containing links to key reports on air pollution are all available via the **Unmask My City international press kit located [here](#).**

About Unmask My City

Unmask My City is a global initiative galvanizing health professionals to foster the adoption of policies in their communities that will reduce air pollution in support of the WHO 2030 goals for healthy air in cities around the world, and grow awareness of this health issue among the health sector. The initiative is the result of a partnership between the Global Climate and Health Alliance (GCHA), Health Care Without Harm, the Health and Environment Alliance, the US Climate and Health Alliance, the UK Health Alliance for Climate Change — and their membership organisations.

About the light masks

The technology has three parts:

1. An [AirBeam air quality monitor](#) made by US NGO [HabitatMap](#) (open source, can be built or purchased for \$250). This measures PM2.5 particulate matter and personal pollution maps to be made by bluetoothing it to:
2. The AirCasting smartphone app, also by Habitatmap. This plots the readings for the device on a google map, which can be crowdsourced into online pollution maps of a city.
3. An LED light mask. Built by Greg McNevin, it changes colour in real time according to the measurements from the AirBeam/AirCasting measurements.

The AirBeam measures PM2.5 particulates and provides estimates of micrograms (one-millionth of a gram) per cubic meter air ($\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$). The scale it uses is based on the [revised Air Quality Index for PM2.5](#). The colours mean:

- Green: Good quality air with little to no risk.
- Yellow: Moderate risks for those unusually sensitive to air pollution.
- Orange: Unhealthy for sensitive groups.
- Red: Unhealthy for everyone, with sensitive groups potentially facing serious health effects.

The Global website with city pages and their online petitions will launch on May 2nd:

<http://unmaskmycity.org/en/>

Attachments: Sample Unmask My City cards and photos