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## AMERICAN LUNG ASSOCIATION ISSUES STATE OF THE AIR REPORT: MIXED GRADES FOR SOUTH CAROLINA

May 1, 2008— The American Lung Association issued its annual report card on air pollution today, ranking cities most affected by three types of pollution: short-term particle pollution, year-round particle pollution and ozone pollution. For the first time ever, a city outside California, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, tops one of the most polluted lists in the ninth consecutive *American Lung Association State of the Air* report. Several cities across the country lost footing and slipped closer to the top of the list of most ozone-polluted cities, including San Diego, Atlanta, Charlotte and the Baltimore-Washington, D.C. metro area.

In South Carolina:

- The Greenville-Spartanburg-Anderson area moved for the first time to the 25 worst list for annual particle pollution, ranking 22<sup>nd</sup>, from its position at 32<sup>nd</sup> in 2007.
- Richland County got a mixed report card, where continued problems with ozone pollution and short-term or 24-hour particle pollution brought grades of “F” contrasting with a passing grade for long-term particle pollution exposure.
- Charleston’s continued problems with short-term or 24-hour particle pollution earned an “F”, but earned a passing grade for long-term particle pollution and a “B” in ozone pollution exposure.

The American Lung Association report used air pollution data from 2004-2006, collected by state air pollution control agencies and reviewed by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Unhealthful levels of ozone and particle pollution mean that people in high-risk categories are particularly threatened by poor air quality. They include children, teens and seniors, and people with asthma, chronic bronchitis, emphysema, cardiovascular disease and diabetes.

“The air quality in several cities has improved, but in others, declines in pollution have stalled. The trends tell us loud and clear that we need to do more to protect Americans from breathing air that’s simply hazardous to their health,” said Bernadette Toomey, President and Chief Executive Officer, American Lung Association.

Due to the lead time for the *State of the Air* report, the American Lung Association used the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) 1997 standard for ozone levels rather than the new tighter standard announced on March 12, 2008. "If we were to measure the number of unhealthy days against the new ozone standard, it would show that ozone pollution is worse than the report indicates," said Ms. Toomey.

For local and state-by-state details included in the *American Lung Association State of the Air 2008* report and to learn how you can protect yourself and your family from air pollution, go to [www.lungusa.org](http://www.lungusa.org). While you're there, you can send a message to members of Congress to urge them to keep the Clean Air Act strong.

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### **About the American Lung Association**

Beginning our second century, the American Lung Association is the leading organization working to prevent lung disease and promote lung health. Lung disease death rates continue to increase while other leading causes of death have declined. The American Lung Association funds vital research on the causes of and treatments for lung disease. With the generous support of the public, the American Lung Association is "*Improving life, one breath at a time.*" For more information about the American Lung Association or to support the work it does, call 1-800-LUNG-USA (1-800-586-4872) or log on to [www.lungusa.org](http://www.lungusa.org).