

## **Mothers for Clean Air Organizational History and Description**

Mothers for Clean Air (MfCA) is a non-profit, 501(c)(3) organization of nearly 1000 parents and community members concerned about the adverse effects of Houston area air pollution, particularly on the health of children. Mothers for Clean Air serves as a collective voice to keep state and local government, industry and consumers focused on obtaining and maintaining cleaner air. Mothers for Clean Air conducts educational activities for children and adults about air pollution, its effects on health, reducing exposure and decreasing air pollution both on a regional and a community level.

Mothers for Clean Air (MfCA) was created in 1995 to serve as an informal membership arm of the Galveston-Houston Association for Smog Prevention (GHASP), a local environmental organization working toward clean air in this area. In 1996, MfCA was incorporated as a separate Texas nonprofit educational corporation. Federal tax-exempt status was awarded in September 1997, and the first general meeting was held in November 1997.

MfCA is funded through private foundations, government grants, and individual contributions. A joint MfCA-GHASP grant from the W. Alton Jones Foundation in 1998 helped MfCA establish itself as an independent entity, build membership, and set up an office in the Houston Environmental Center. This grant also funded a project to educate day care staff and parents in low-income eastern Harris County about the health hazards of air pollution.

From 1997 to 2001, a series of four grants from the U.S. EPA Office of Environmental Justice helped MfCA form chapters in four low-income communities in the Houston area: Woodland Acres, Barrett Station, Houston's Fifth Ward and Southeast Houston. The purpose of these chapters is to empower residents to identify, prioritize, and begin to solve their environmental justice issues. In 2003, residents of west Houston organized the Spring Branch/Memorial chapter

In addition to organizational work in defined communities, MfCA also educates the general public and participates in policy-making in the eight counties defined by the EPA as non-attainment for the air pollutant, ozone. MfCA communicates air quality status, current research, health effects and legislative progress through a quarterly newsletter, Clearing the Air, that is mailed to more than 1000 members and stakeholders. E-mail notices of actions to take for clean air are sent to 300 members. Our website [www.mothersforcleanair.org](http://www.mothersforcleanair.org) provides additional information and resources on Houston-Galveston air quality for citizens, teachers, and students. MfCA also sponsors public educational programs, provides guest speakers, conducts hands-on activities for children and participates in community-based events and school health fairs.