

Anti-smog campaign has paid off, report says

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California's four-decade-long crackdown on smog-causing automotive emissions has paid off in sharp reductions in air pollution, a new report by the Environment California Research and Policy Center concludes.

Since 1980, the Los Angeles-based center says, peak smog levels have dropped by 70 percent in the Los Angeles area, 50 per cent in the San Diego area and in the Sacramento Valley, 40 percent in the San Francisco Bay Area, and 33 percent in the San Joaquin Valley.

"California's efforts to reduce air pollution from cars and trucks have made the state's air cleaner than it has been in decades - and Californians are healthier as a result," said Bernadette Del Chiaro, co-author of the report. "The technologies found on new car lots today were practically unimaginable even 20 years ago, much less 40 years ago. Yet thanks to strong policies, California has pushed the auto industry to innovate and engineer a greener, cleaner car."

The report says that emissions of smog-forming pollutants from cars and trucks have dropped by 85 percent since 1975, even though the number of vehicles and the amount of vehicular travel are much higher. Current automobile models emit just one percent of the pollution that vehicles of the earlier era generated.

The full report is titled "Clean Cars in California: Four Decades of Progress in the Unfinished Battle to Clean Up Our Air."