

Mexico City businesses say smog alert cost \$300 mn

May 3 2016



A newspaper vendor wears a surgical mask in smog-covered Mexico City on May 3, 2016

Traffic bans imposed by Mexico City authorities to reverse an upsurge of smog have cost residents and small businesses more than \$300 million since April, a trade association said Tuesday.

For the second time in a month, the government banned 40 percent of

cars in the capital on Tuesday after [ozone levels](#) exceeded acceptable limits.

The Chamber of Small Services and Tourism Commerce of Mexico City urged the authorities to find other ways to improve the [air quality](#) in the [city](#) of more than 20 million people and 5.5 million vehicles.

The vehicle ban "clearly does not solve the problem, it generates high costs for the population and it weakens the city's economic activity," the chamber said in a statement.

The government imposed new measures on April 5 that ban 20 percent of cars every day until June 30, with the number doubling if ozone levels surpass a measurement of 150 points.

The latest alert was activated because levels exceeded 160 points on Monday. It is the second time since April that 40 percent of vehicles have been kept off the roads.

The chamber said the new measures have so far cost 5.4 billion pesos, or \$300 million, to city residents, small shops and service providers whose transportation has been restricted.

The group said officials should not wait until the end of the extraordinary measures on June 30 to present a strategy to combat air pollution, such as modernizing public transport.

The chamber said the city must combat "corruption" at vehicle emission test centers that have allowed polluting cars to stay on the roads.

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