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Title : Air quality website to help Singaporeans keep car cabins healthy

By :

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SINGAPORE : Think you can avoid the pollution outside by staying in the car? Think again.

Environmental experts say there is a higher concentration of hazardous air toxics inside the vehicle compared to walking down a road, during heavy traffic.

So car passengers face more risk than pedestrians in developing serious health problems, like cancer and respiratory diseases.

The Singapore Environment Council has put up a [website](#) to help Singaporeans understand the importance of improving car cabin air quality.

While air fresheners may help your car smell good, they won't help clean the air.

Experts say the awful smell in your car may just indicate poor air quality and that it's time you do something about it.

Air filtration expert Tsai Woei Long said: "Using air fresheners mask the problems temporarily. We should look where the source of the problem and eliminate it. That is the proper way of dealing with smell and odour."

Outside air is drawn into the cabin and re-circulated, so the driver and his passengers are actually breathing unfiltered air from exhaust fumes and other contaminants.

When pollutants enter the car, the air toxic concentration builds up in a matter of minutes, especially when the air-conditioning system is operating at 100% recycled air.

And packing your car with items like car cleaning and grooming aids increases the level of contaminants.

Car owners are advised to keep the air inside the cabin clean and unpolluted.

One way is to install air conditioning filters and conduct regular air conditioning checks.

The Environment Council's online tool also gives tips on how you can check the air quality in your car.

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