



# EMERALD KEEPERS

For an Emerald Green, Ocean Blue Coronado

# ACHOO!

## ALLERGY SEASON GETTING LONGER AND STRONGER

**S**pring brings warmer days and bountiful blooms but for those with allergies, the season can also bring sniffles, sneezing, and wheezing. In San Diego, allergies peak in April, May, and September. Pollen allergies affect more than 30% of the global population, and allergies are more than just an inconvenience. They are considered a public health issue as people feel ill, change their activities, and miss work.

### POLLEN IS THE PROBLEM

Allergies are triggered by pollen, which are dustlike grains produced by trees, grass, and weeds. In San Diego, tree pollen — sometimes seen as a yellow dust — from ash, cypress, oak,

maple, and walnut trees is the cause of most spring allergy symptoms. In summer months, it's grass pollen. Later in the year, San Diego's pollen is mostly from weeds such as sagebrush, saltbrush, thistle, and ragweed.

Smaller pollens rise higher into the atmosphere as temperatures warm. When the air cools during the nighttime and early morning, pollen particles drop down exacerbating allergies.

### LONGER ALLERGY SEASON

Unfortunately, climate change means allergy season is getting longer and more intense. As the current warming trend continues, peak pollen season will start earlier and last longer. Data shows peak pollen season is already longer and more concentrated than in previous decades.

Emissions from gas-powered vehicles also impact pollen because carbon dioxide fuels photosynthesis, leading to increased plant growth and the potential for more pollen production.

Researchers at the University of Michigan found rising temperatures and greater carbon-dioxide levels could increase the annual amount of emitted pollen up to 200%, causing significant impact for those with allergies.

### POLLEN FORECAST

Pollen forecasts consider factors like wind, humidity, and precipitation to figure out how much pollen gets into the air and look at atmospheric models that show how pollen moves around. Windy, dry days can cause greater exposure to allergens. Similarly, heavy rains can worsen pollen allergies as raindrops disperse pollen particles.

### KNOW YOUR POLLEN

Air quality reports found on most weather apps or websites do not report pollen counts. The Weather Channel provides a 15-day allergy forecast indicating low, medium, or high risk of allergy symptoms

Increased allergies is another consequence of climate change that will be felt around the world, including Coronado.



Oak tree



Ragweed



Walnut tree



Thistle



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