Amidst growing concern with the consequences of ground level ozone on health, and the continued failure of the UK to meet European air quality directives, Air Monitors, a specialist instrumentation company, has launched a new portable UV-based ozone monitor which significantly enhances the ability to measure the air that people breathe.

The handheld Personal Ozone Monitor (POM) allows accurate and precise (2ppb) measurement of ambient ozone in air across a wide concentration range (2 ppb to 10 ppm). The instrument has an inbuilt display, so users can view real-time data.

Small, lightweight (0.34kg) and with a low power requirement, it is suitable for diverse applications such as Health and Safety monitoring at industrial sites, personal exposure monitoring, vertical profiling with balloons etc. and urban arrays of ground-based detectors.

Other functions include on-board GPS, providing location data with each ozone measurement, and a memory capacity of 341 days (when taking hourly measurements) – all data can be transferred to a PC at a later time. This makes the POM suitable for long-term monitoring at remote locations where power is limited.

Air Monitors is the sole distributor in the UK, and Managing Director Jim Mills says “Most people are aware of the fact that stratospheric ozone is beneficial to humans because it protects us from harmful UV radiation. However, the dangerous effects of ozone at ground level are less well known; it causes eye, nose and throat irritation, chest discomfort, coughs and headaches, particularly in people who exercise or suffer from bronchitis, respiratory allergies or asthma. Ozone also damages crops and materials such as rubber, paint and textiles.

“The major advantage of the POM is that it provides a means with which ozone can be monitored in the air that people breathe.”