

Is Oklahoma's Air OK?

There are days when Oklahoma's air isn't okay for everyone. The more we know about air pollution the more we recognize its effects on the human body. Though many healthy individuals may not experience symptoms of exposure, others can clearly tell when there's something in the air.

Air pollution affects children, older adults, and persons with compromised respiratory and pulmonary systems at much lower concentrations than it affects the general public. Recognizing the impacts of air pollution exposure could help you avoid the consequences of that exposure.

How do we know what's in the air?

DEQ's Air Quality Division developed and maintains a monitoring network across the state. We monitor for ozone, fine particulate matter, coarse particulate matter, carbon monoxide, nitrogen dioxide, sulfur dioxide, lead, and specific toxic substances, such as mercury.

Much of today's monitoring is automated. Concentrations for most substances are recorded every few minutes and reported hourly on our website. Current conditions and forecasts are regularly updated here:

<https://www.deq.ok.gov/air-quality-division/ambient-monitoring/current-air-quality-forecasts/>.

But how will you know?

We've developed tools to help the public know more about Oklahoma's air. Every morning one of our meteorologists posts the air quality forecast for Oklahoma City, Tulsa, and Lawton to our website. It's called the AQI (Air Quality Index) and it is Oklahoma's contribution to a national air quality forecast. You can access it on our website above or using EPA's national site <https://www.airnow.gov/>.

If you only want to know when the air quality is impacted, then sign up for Air Quality Health Advisories. They are statewide email and text notifications that advise you when concentrations of air pollution are unhealthy for sensitive groups so you can determine your level of exposure and lessen the consequences. Sign up here:

<https://www.deq.ok.gov/air-quality-division/sign-up-for-air-quality-notifications/>

You can also sign up to receive Ozone Alerts from certain Metro areas when the following day's AQI is forecast to be unhealthy for sensitive groups:

Tulsa:

<https://tulsaairquality.com/ozone-alert-program/>

Oklahoma City:

<https://www.acogok.org/transportation-planning/air-quality/ozone-alert-days/>

Lawton:

<http://www.lawtonmpo.org/clean-air-lawton/>



Do You Hold the Key to Cleaner Air?

Recent improvements in automobiles use cleaner fuel and are more efficient than ever before. Now that you know where to get air quality information, there are lots of things you can do to lower emissions from your vehicles especially on Ozone Alert days.

1. Don't idle your car.

Idling for at least 10 seconds uses more fuel than turning off and restarting the engine.

2. Get fuel when it's cool.

Get gas during the cool parts of the day such as the early morning or evening.

3. Don't top off the tank.

Topping off when refueling can release excess fumes in the air and may lead to gas spills.

4. Trip-chain.

Combine errands and activities while out and about in your vehicle.

5. Take care of your car.

Conduct regular maintenance and check tire pressure often.

6. Help spread the word for clean air.

Sign up for air quality alerts, advocate for idle-free zones, and promote carpooling and telework at your office.

For more tips on how to reduce your emissions, see our 10 Simple Steps fact sheet:

https://www.deq.ok.gov/wp-content/uploads/deqmainresources/10SimpleSteps_05-2022.pdf

For information about air quality call DEQ's Air Quality Division at (405) 702-4100.

