



Air Quality Division

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Michigan Department of Environmental Quality

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DEQ Internet Home Page:
www.michigan.gov/deqair
Environmental Assistance Center:
800-662-9278
Pollution Emergencies:
800-292-4706

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Business and community activities as well as daily activities of individuals impact Michigan's air resource. Staff in the Air Quality Division work to ensure Michigan's air remains clean.

The Air Quality Program

The [Air Quality Division \(AQD\)](#) regulates [sources of air pollutants](#) to minimize adverse impact on human health, the environment, and society. The AQD's goals are to:

- *meet and maintain [federal and state air quality standards](#) using the [best available technology](#) and cost-effective controls;*
- *limit emissions of [hazardous and toxic pollutants](#); and*
- *keep the public informed about air quality conditions.*

AQD staff work to identify and reduce existing outdoor air pollution problems and to prevent significant deterioration of the air resource. This includes air [emission control programs](#); [air monitoring](#); [control strategy planning](#); partnerships to promote voluntary reductions; [issuance of permits](#); and [inspection of air emission sources](#). Services offered by the AQD include [emission credit trading](#) opportunities, partnership programs, active participation in special air monitoring studies, dissemination of current air quality information, facility inspection, and air pollution complaint response.

Overview of Air Rules

Over 30 years of air pollution control have significantly improved air quality in Michigan. Working with industry, efforts to control air pollution have made our state a leader in the struggle for cleaner air. The federal [Clean Air Act](#) (as amended in 1990) directs the focus of air pollution control in the United States. The state of Michigan incorporated those requirements into [Part 55, Air Pollution Control, of the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act, 1994 PA 451, as amended](#).

District Offices

Staff in the AQD field offices perform the essential field work and investigations within each district. In addition to source investigation duties, district staff are often the first line contact for both the industrial public and the general public with questions, concerns, and complaints. Many air quality functions have been delegated to the district office to enable field staff to provide faster and more efficient service. Your [local district office](#), listed to the left on this fact sheet, will help determine answers to air quality questions.

Air Use Permits

Air use permits are required for air pollutant emission sources such as coal-fired power plants, solid waste incinerators, chemical plants, and automobile painting facilities. AQD staff evaluate nearly 500 permit applications per year. The two primary objectives of the permit review are to ensure that state-of-the-art pollution control equipment is utilized to minimize the emission of air contaminants and to ensure that the resultant emissions meet applicable [health and welfare standards](#) and do not cause harm to human health or the environment. The process has been improved to make it more "user friendly" for applicants. Tools to assist customers in completing air use permit applications have been and continue to be developed. Information about the [renewable operating permit software package \(PASS-ROP\)](#) is available via the AQD internet homepage or from district offices. The AQD places a strong emphasis in processing complete applications in a timely manner.

Compliance and Enforcement

Air pollution sources are evaluated and investigated for compliance with air standards and permit requirements. Those responsible for emissions at levels above what is allowed by law are accountable for their actions. Although resolution of air pollution problems and violations is normally accomplished through voluntary compliance by the companies involved, enforcement actions against violating sources are initiated for significant violations.

Air Quality Evaluation

AQD staff are responsible for: [ambient air monitoring and air trends assessment](#), [air toxics risk assessment](#), [quantifying air contaminant emissions from stationary sources](#), conducting [modeling](#) to determine air emission impacts, identifying areas not in compliance with federal standards, and developing [Michigan's State Implementation Plans](#) for attainment and maintenance of federal air quality standards in partnership with local planning agencies. With the adoption of two new and more stringent air standards, some areas in Michigan must further reduce ozone and fine particle pollution.

Outreach

AQD has developed many avenues to provide expanded services and information to the citizens of Michigan. In addition to general brochures and fact sheets, partnerships have been formed in areas such as voluntary ozone reduction, [emission trading](#), and [pollution prevention](#). Various training seminars have been and will continue to be offered to help clients interpret current air regulations and permit applications. Computer software to assist companies in completing air use permit applications is available via DEQ's Internet homepage. Seminars are periodically offered to assist customers who want to participate in air quality programs such as emission trading. Check out the homepage at www.michigan.gov/deqair. The web page provides air program information, federally mandated air monitoring data via the [Michigan Air Quality Index](#) (updated hourly), "[Ozone Action!](#)" notification, [air use permit information](#), [toxic chemical listings](#), [clean air laws](#). [Mfair](#) is a new web-based service that allows people to view real-time air data, enroll to receive air quality notifications, and more!

What pollutants are in the air?

CARBON MONOXIDE: ----- A colorless, odorless, poisonous gas produced by incomplete combustion of substances containing carbon. The leading source is automobile exhaust.

LEAD: ----- Metal element, which may be released in the form of tiny particles from smelters and from car exhaust.

NITROGEN DIOXIDE: ----- Yellow-brown gas emitted during combustion of all types of fuels. Sources include cars, power plants, and certain chemical manufacturing facilities.

OZONE: ----- A colorless, pungent gas formed by a reaction of sunlight and certain volatile organic compounds (VOCs). The VOCs are emitted from car exhausts, painting operations, solvent usage, gasoline, and power plants.

PARTICULATE: ----- Particles may be smoke, dust, spray, or fumes. Sources include manufacturing operations, power plants, diesel emissions, woodstoves, and leaf burning. Industrial source emissions have declined by 85 percent since 1974. Fine, respirable particulate remains a major health concern.

SULFUR DIOXIDE: ----- A heavy, pungent, colorless gas formed when coal, fuel oil, or any fuel containing sulfur is burned. Industrial sources have reduced emissions by over 60 percent since 1974.

TOXICS: ----- Other compounds found in the air such as metals from plating facilities and chemicals from chemical processes, painting operations, and even woodstoves.

Air Quality Printed Publications – 517-373-7023

- [Clean Air for Michigan](#)
- [Controlling Toxic Air Pollution in Michigan](#)
- [Burning Household Waste](#)
- [Dirty Air is Hard to Bear](#)
- [Michigan Air Quality Permit Regulations](#)
- [Open Burning Regulations](#)
- [Annual Air Quality Report](#)

You Can Make Clean Air Choices . . .

Conserve energy ★ Use public transportation, form a car pool, bike, or walk ★ Consider alternative fuels
 Reduce, reuse, and recycle whatever you can ★ Support environmentally responsible products and businesses
 Compost leaves instead of burning them ★ Report air pollution problems.