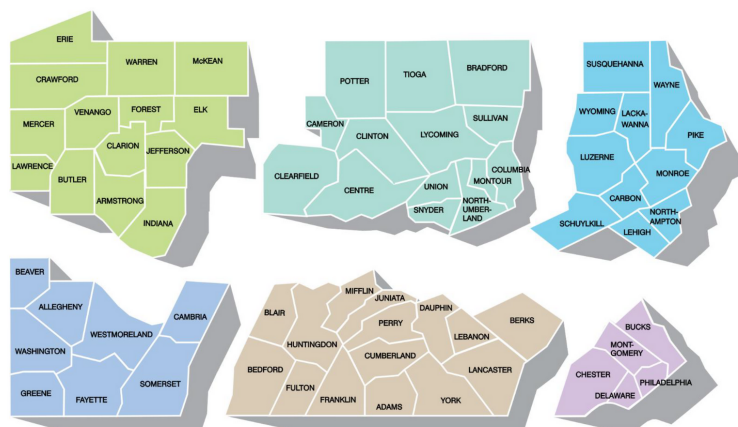


# Air Quality 101

## How do I report a problem?

The PA Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) regulates air quality in Pennsylvania. The state is broken into 6 regions with a separate DEP office in charge of each region.

Allegheny and Philadelphia Counties are the exceptions to this rule. These counties are regulated by a local regulatory agency.



### If you live in Allegheny County

Your air quality is regulated by the Allegheny County Health Department (ACHD).

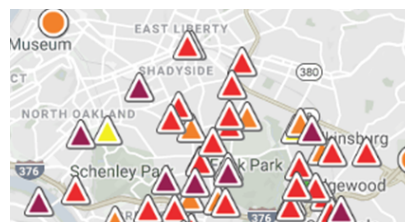


Call (412) 687-ACHD  
or visit [www.alleghenycounty.us](http://www.alleghenycounty.us)  
and search "air quality complaint."

### You can also use the Smell PGH app

Download CMU's Smell PGH app. It allows you to report foul odors directly to ACHD while providing a visualization of what your neighborhood is smelling.

Please note that the app reports at the end of the day, so emergencies should be reported directly to ACHD.



### Outside Allegheny County?

Your air quality is regulated by the DEP.



Call (412) 442-4184  
or visit [www.dep.pa.gov](http://www.dep.pa.gov)  
and search "air quality complaint."

## How can I get more involved?

### Reach out to your representatives

Call, email, or write to your local, state, and federal officials. Use your voice to let them know you have a right to clean, healthy air.



Visit [gasp-pgh.org](http://gasp-pgh.org) for up to date information on government officials.

### Write a letter to the editor

Amplify information about air quality issues by writing a letter to your local newspaper.



A good resource for writing letters to the editor is the National Education Association. Visit <http://www.nea.org/home/19683.htm>

## More ways to get involved

### Attend ACHD Board of Health meetings

Attending meetings is a way to stay up to date on decisions made about the county's air quality. Speakers may address agenda & non-agenda items.



Visit [alleghenycounty.us](http://alleghenycounty.us) and search for "public meeting schedule" to learn more.

### Become a member of GASP!

Greater membership allows us to be more influential when meeting with elected officials, taking legal action, and serving as a watchdog organization.



Or sign up for our GASP-alerts to stay up to date on air quality news. Visit [gasp-pgh.org](http://gasp-pgh.org).

### Become a Smoke Reader

Smoke Readers receive the same training as air quality inspectors. After trained, Readers watch for possible violations and alert regulators, increasing scrutiny on facilities.



This training is for Allegheny County residents and is free through GASP. Call our office at 412-924-0604 or email Sue at [sue@gasp-pgh.org](mailto:sue@gasp-pgh.org).

## AQ Terminology

**National Ambient Air Quality Standards:** NAAQS are nation wide standards set by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) that regulate levels of the 6 Criteria Air Pollutants due to their widespread nature and the significant harm they pose to human health and the environment.

**Criteria Air Pollutants:** The 6 pollutants with national standards set by the EPA; including ground level ozone, particulate matter, carbon monoxide, lead, sulfur dioxide, and nitrogen dioxide.

**Nonattainment:** An area where air quality is worse than the standard set by the NAAQS. These areas must make plans and take actions to improve air quality and attain the NAAQS within a certain period of time.

**Major Source:** Facilities that have the potential to emit pollutants in amounts equal to or greater than the corresponding major source threshold levels. These threshold levels vary by pollutant and/or source category. To find a list of major sources check out GASP's Air Permits Clearinghouse.

**Minor Source:** Facilities that have the potential to emit pollutants in amounts less than the corresponding major source thresholds.

**Title V Operating Permit:** A required permit for major sources of air pollution. These permits must include all of the federal, state, and local air pollution law requirements that apply to the facility. They help improve compliance by making it easier to see which regulations each facility must follow.

**Consent Decree:** A voluntary agreement worked out between two or more parties to a dispute. They generally have the same effect as a court order and can be enforced by the court if a party does not comply with the orders.

Visit [gasp-pgh.org](http://gasp-pgh.org) or call 412-924-0604 for more info.

