



ALLEGHENY COUNTY

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Air Quality in County Continues to Improve with More Work Being Done

PITTSBURGH – Deputy Director of Environmental Health Jim Kelly responded today to the American Lung Association’s report on air quality:

“We all want clean air, no matter where we live, and the Allegheny County Health Department works tirelessly to improve air quality throughout the county and for every resident. As part of our efforts, we recently launched a new air quality dashboard to provide a better understanding of the data in their neighborhood. This work was influenced by public input, and we will continue to rely on the public, as well as industry leaders, public officials and environmental groups, to help shape our policies. While we have made great strides with our efforts to improve air quality, we also understand that work remains, particularly in the Mon Valley. As such, the ACHD will continue to be aggressive with enforcement, transparent with our data and innovative with our policies.”

Kelly also noted that the data used in the report is not current (and is often years old) and is also quite limited as it bases the entire region’s air quality solely on the Liberty monitor, which has the highest readings for annual fine particulate matter (PM2.5) in the county. The other monitors in the county, all of which show data that meet World Health Organization standards, are not included. The Liberty monitor is unique because it is heavily influenced by emissions from a single site, the Clairton Coke Works, the largest coking facility in North America.

“The Health Department’s improvements have been cited as some, if not the best in the country. In addition to new initiatives, we have made substantial improvements in our air program, including increased enforcement-oriented staff and activity,” Kelly continued. “The department’s enforcement authority stems from the Clean Air Act and is based on improving the air to meet the federal standards. Now that the federal standards are being met, we are exploring atypical options to continue to improve air quality below the federal levels. We have additionally initiated toxics and H2S monitoring, demonstrating our efforts to improve air quality in other areas besides the federal standards.”

In the past few months, the department has made a number of announcements relative to its work on air quality, including:

[Health Department Launches New Air Quality Dashboard](#)
[Health Department to Begin Sending Mon Valley Air Quality Alerts](#)
[Air Quality in Mon Valley Returns to Moderate Levels](#)
[Clairton Works Issued Notice of Violation for Hydrogen Sulfide Exceedances](#)
[Federal Air Quality Standards Attained at All Eight Monitors for First Time Ever](#)
[County’s Air Quality Monitoring Network Updated](#)

The most up-to-date data can be found on the department’s air quality website, which also houses the new dashboard: <http://alleghenycounty.us/airquality>.

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