

The Air You Breathe

Free Quarterly Newsletter from Akron Regional Air Quality Management District

November 2020

Volume 35, Issue 4



Overview of Ohio EPA Virtual Site Visits

ARAQMD, the local air agency for Ohio EPA in Medina, Summit & Portage counties has been implementing the Virtual Site Visit (VSV). Here is more from Ohio EPA on how VSVs work.

Part of Ohio EPA's core mission is to ensure compliance with environmental laws and regulations. During the COVID-19 pandemic, we have been effectively working with virtual tools and technology.

As we optimize our use of various technology tools, the Agency is now exploring opportunities to use these tools in the field through virtual site visits (VSV). In the near term, our ability to expand our field presence with these tools will allow us to continue collecting important information from our regulated entities while also protecting against the potential spread of COVID-19. In the longer-term, adding the use of virtual tools to the Agency's compliance toolkit, both from a compliance inspection and assistance standpoint, can help us reach even more facilities because of the efficiencies gained in reducing travel time, etc.

The Agency will pilot the use of VSVs for select categories of inspections (routine, single program, initial screening, non-enforcement related). We will be asking you to complete a survey after the VSV to help assess the effectiveness and improve the process.

This fact sheet provides guidance to help you learn which technology you will need and what you can expect during a VSV. The process itself will be very much like our normal inspection process.

Opening Meeting

The first step in the process will be a pre-meeting conducted by Ohio EPA by phone/video conference. We will discuss all logistics to ensure a successful VSV. The actual inspection will be accomplished virtually, using a live streaming application in combination with photographs.

Virtual Facility Walk-Through

During the VSV, you will walk the inspector through portions of the facility to identify all areas that would normally be evaluated on site. This type of evaluation will allow for a compliance/complaint evaluation inspection to occur without our inspectors entering your facility.

The use of virtual tools is not a substitute for the important in-person interactions needed during inspections and other field work and for effective engagement and outreach. However, the Agency is optimistic about the potential for expanding the use of these tools where they can be effective.

More Information

If you have questions about Ohio EPA inspections, contact ARAQMD or the Office of Compliance Assistance and Pollution Prevention (OCAPP) at (614) 644-3469 or (800) 329-7518 for free help.

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Virtual Site Visit Tips

- Familiarize yourself with the media platform (ability to connect and stream video/photos) being used. You will need to download Teams or ensure that you are using Google Chrome or Microsoft Edge
- What equipment do you need for the meeting (camera, phone, headset, earbuds, etc.)?
- Consider using a headset with a microphone if your facility is noisy.
- Speak clearly, mute your microphone and turn off your camera when it is not needed.
- Use the web camera in landscape mode versus portrait for most situations.
- When including multiple participants from different locations (supervisors, consultants, legal team, etc.), be aware of bandwidth issues that may affect video and audio quality.
- Update the facility diagram to help designate targeted focal points during the virtual inspection. Provide a copy to your inspector when scheduling the VSV.

Join Us In Congratulating...

Sean Vadas as he has accepted the position of Chief Engineer for ARAQMD! Sean began his career with ARAQMD in 1996 and has been an integral part of our team ever since. He has served many years on the statewide Permitting & Engineering committee, most recently as the committee chair. Sean's dedication to the field of air quality, and years of experience made him an ideal candidate for this position. We look forward to many years with Sean leading our Engineering team!

As Sean has advanced into management, and we sadly said farewell to Chris Radcliffe (he took an IT position with Summit County Public Health), our team of engineers are transitioning to some new coverage areas. Your facility may have a new primary contact here at ARAQMD. If you have questions, please feel free to contact our offices at 330-375.2480.



Hands on Sustainability: Year of Air Quality

On October 15 and 16, the Big Love network, a local community organization, partnered with the Akron Regional Air Quality Management District (ARAQMD), Bridgestone/Firestone, the Summit Soil and Water Conservation District and the City of Akron to present the Hands on Sustainability 2025: Year of Air workshop. Hands on Sustainability 2025 is an eight year initiative in which an annual conference is held to focus on a specific topic and its relationship to sustainability. Due to COVID-19 concerns, this year's conference was held virtually as an evening networking and learning session.

Thursday evening was celebrated by over 25 participants. The keynote address was presented by Executive Director of the National Association of Clean Air Agencies (NACAA), Miles Keogh. He presented how air quality is affected by things such as climate change, energy production and motor vehicles, as well as how air pollution has impacted our citizens inequitably due to systemic racism. This discussion rolled into the other topic on the evening's agenda, racism as a public health crisis. The conversations were very productive and beneficial for the community's direction.

On Friday, the main event was held with over 60 participants. The event had a main room, where overall discussions were held, and several breakout rooms, where specific topics were discussed. The breakout topics included health equity, transportation, air quality policy, asthma, and carbon neutral neighborhoods. Each breakout room had its own set of local experts to educate the participants about the topic before the group attempted to create a plan for moving forward on that topic to improve the air quality of the region.

The participants included many students of the Akron Public Schools who provided a fresh new outlook on the issues, while being educated about the topics. Special thanks go to the experts from ARAQMD partners; Metro RTA, AMATS, NACAA, and Akron Children's Hospital.



Hands On Sustainability: Year of Clean Air

October 15-16 via Zoom

Topics this year are:

**Transportation
Health Equity
Policy
Childhood Asthma**

**Carbon Neutral Neighborhood
Akron Regional Air Quality Management**

Join in the Appreciative Inquiry process to help
Dream, Discover and Design our area's sustainable
Destiny!

Thursday Oct 15 (FREE)

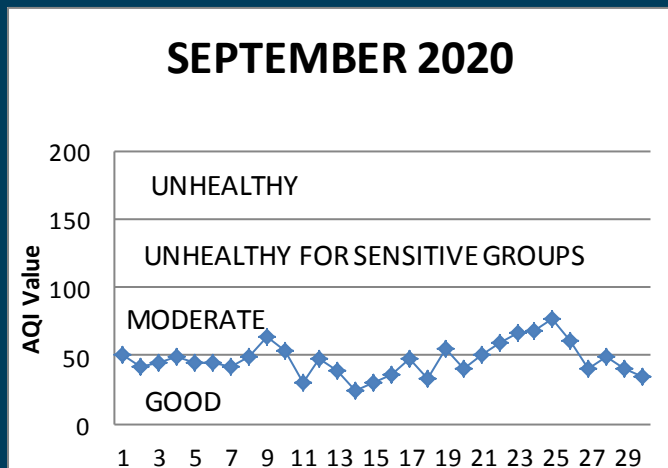
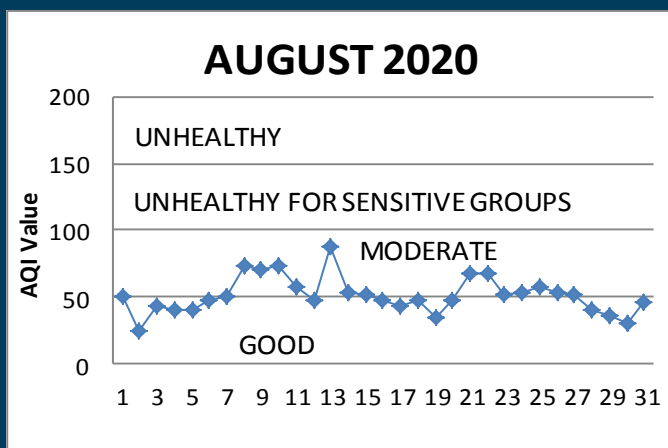
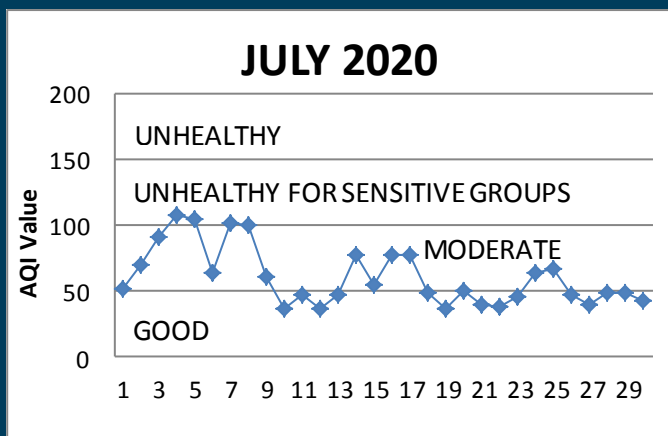
www.eventbrite.com/e/98839085365

Friday Oct 16 (\$20)

www.eventbrite.com/e/113671967916

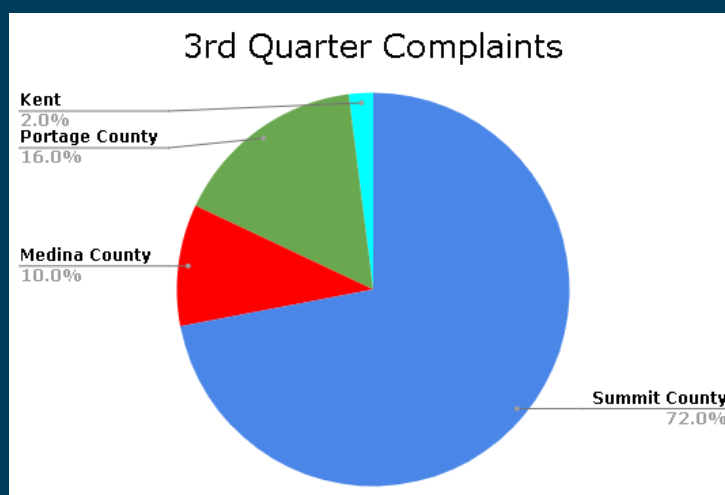
AQ by the Numbers: 3rd Quarter 2020

Air Quality Index



Complaints & Inspections

Area/ Health District	Commercial/ Industrial	Residential	Total
Summit County	8	28	36
Medina County	1	4	5
Portage County	0	8	8
Kent	0	1	1



Site Visits*	3rd Quarter 2020
FEPTIO	18
Title V	10
Non Title V	44
Full Compliance Evaluations	0

*virtual visits per OEPA

Additional Stats

Permits Issued							
3rd Quarter 2020	Permit to Install		Permit to Install & Operate		Title V		Permit by Rule
	Draft	Final	Draft	Final	Draft**	Final	Total
**Includes - Preliminary Proposed Permits & Proposed Permits	0	0	4	12	1	0	8

Asbestos	
3rd Q—Notifications	45
3rd Q—Inspections	40



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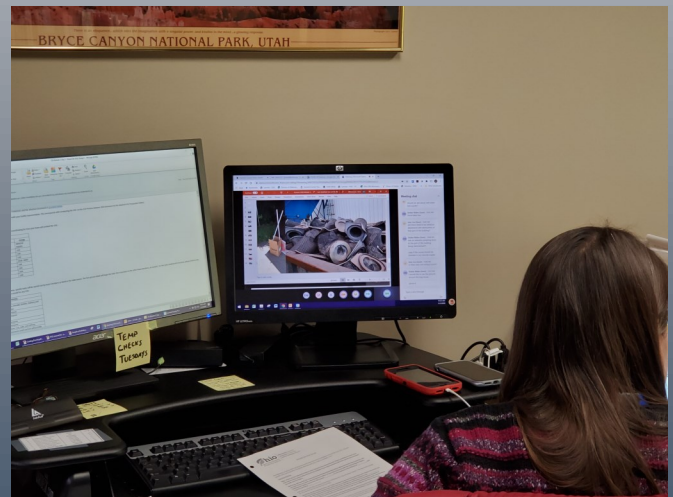
A service of Summit County Public Health

Sharpening Inspection Skills

Ohio EPA periodically provides a training course called the Inspector Training Academy. Historically, this has been an in-person course offered in Columbus. Due to COVID19 restrictions, Ohio EPA reframed the course as a live, online course offered through Microsoft Teams. ARAQMD registered five staff members, both new and veteran inspectors and supervisors, to attend this online course.

The course is made up of four modules spanning eight days of training. The modules include Legal Considerations, Effective Communications, Inspection Process and Complaint Investigation.

The course was held on several days throughout September, October and November. At the time of this writing, staff have completed 3 of the 4 modules. When the course is completed, the new staff will have gained knowledge to help them better understand Ohio EPA's policies, requirements and expectations. The course is also an excellent refresher for our more seasoned inspectors.



Training from the comfort of the office!
No travel required.