

# The Air You Breathe

Free Quarterly Newsletter from Akron Regional Air Quality Management District  
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## Do You DO Anything About Complaints?!

### *How Air Quality Complaints are Handled by ARAQMD*

You walk outside one day and notice an unusual odor or see some odd dust in the air. Like most folks, you take note, but don't think too much about it. Until.....it happens again. Then you start to wonder what it is. *Is this odor from a substance that could be harmful to my health? Why are they burning that stuff across the street? Somebody should do something about this. This dust is all over everything. I think this health issue (cough, watery eyes, itchy skin...to name a few) started when this smoke/odor/dust/etc. started. I'm going to call someone.....*

At this point, most people call several entities before being directed to our office so they may be a bit irritated by the time we talk to them. When a complainant calls us (or fills out our online complaint form) here is the basic information we request to get an investigation started:

- ◆ Name of facility or property owner where caller thinks the problem originates.
- ◆ Address of the potential site.
- ◆ Type of complaint. (Odor, smoke, dust, etc.)
- ◆ Date of the event (the time is helpful, too).
- ◆ General description of what is being experienced/observed.
- ◆ If the complaint address is a residence, we may inquire about the presence of dogs, too.

The complaint is then entered into our log and assigned to a staff member to be investigated based on the type of complaint and/or the facility that is of concern. How a complaint is responded to will vary based on several factors, but **all** complaints receive a response from our office.

This is where complainants may end up a bit less than satisfied. Sometimes the activity that bothers someone isn't breaking any air quality rules. The neighbor who has a little back yard campfire regularly....probably not breaking any air pollution rules. The asphalt company up the road that smells bad....may very well be operating in compliance with their air permits. That weird odor that you just KNOW is coming from XYZ company....we may not be able to confirm that suspicion despite many visits to the area by multiple inspectors at various times of the day/week.

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### US EPA Leadership Change

Late in the day on July 5th word came that the US EPA Administrator, Scott Pruitt, had tendered his resignation.

On Monday, July 9th, Andrew Wheeler began in the role of Acting Administrator for US EPA.

Leadership changes can bring with them some uncertainty. ARAQMD assures the businesses and residents of Medina, Summit and Portage Counties that we are here and committed to the pursuit of clean air!

### 100 Followers!!



May not sound like much, but each "follow" helps spread our clean air message!

From Aug 1, 2018 to Sep 30, 2018, the first **50** people to follow **Akron Regional Air Quality Management District's** page will be mailed a super cool pen! You don't want to miss this.

Follow Us!



# 2015 Ozone Designations Completed

When the US EPA sets a new standard for one of the pollutants that make up the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) a series of events set into motion. To determine if an area is in compliance with the new standard several years of data are gathered and reviewed. That review decides if an area meets the standard or not.

If the area does not meet the standard they are given a period of time to come up with a plan on how they will meet the new standard. If there is a delay in telling areas if they meet the standard or not, there will be an inevitable delay in planning for and ultimately in reaching the new goal.

The US EPA took the long and winding path to announcing the areas that failed to meet the 2015 Ozone standard. In late April 2018, all but 8 Texas counties found out if they were in attainment or not.

Our tri-county service area is part of a larger area considered for these decisions. So, while our counties are doing well, others nearby are not and we did NOT meet the 2015 standard.

If you have questions about how the ozone nonattainment designation may affect your facility please call our office to speak with your permitting engineer.

Ozone has been trending downward in our area over the last 20 years. We anticipate that trend to continue and our area to achieve compliance to the latest standard.

## Complaints Continued

Example: A few years ago, our office received a call from a business owner who was pretty fired up. It seemed that for the last few weeks every car in the employees' parking lot kept getting blobs of yellow "stuff" all over them. He was convinced that the blobs came from the business sited just behind them. He took photos and emailed them to us. He insisted that we come and investigate. We did. Based on the photos and our boss' experience with pollen counting, our boss suspected that the yellow blobs were most likely pollen, and had a staff member collect some tape samples. We count pollen all season long with a microscope, so we viewed these tape samples under the microscope, too. Sure enough, it was pollen. A satellite view of the area showed a large, grassy, tree-lined field across the street from the parking lot and agricultural areas just down the road. Apparently that parking lot was in the bees' flight path and the cars were getting pollen bombs as the bees flew over. It wasn't the other company down the road, it was the bees. The yellow spots were annoying, but not an air pollution violation. The complainant was grateful for our response and relieved there was no air quality concern after all.

When we do find an air quality violation, our number one goal is to get the offender to follow the air quality rules. That may be as simple as letting someone know that they really **can't** burn trash, couches, or yard waste. It may be as involved as working with staff at businesses to make sure that they have the required air pollution control technology in place and are operating in compliance with their air permits (or getting the necessary air permits if they lack them).

While our primary goal is not elevating the situation to an enforcement action (legal action sometimes involving fines), we will move that way if a business or individual will not follow air quality rules. And, we definitely are NOT in the business of shutting down a legal operation simply because the neighbors are displeased with its existence. Compliance with air quality rules is our goal in every interaction.

We can't make everyone happy all the time, but you can be confident that we will respond to every complaint that makes it to our office!

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## M.A.T.H. Project Addressing Asthma

If you have a child with asthma, you know how terrifying it can be when they have an asthma attack! For some families these attacks mean somewhat regular trips to the local emergency room.

Akron Children's Hospital (ACH),



Summit County Public Health (SCPH) and AR-AQMD have been working to help some of the most hard to manage cases by teaching community health workers from ACH basic information about indoor

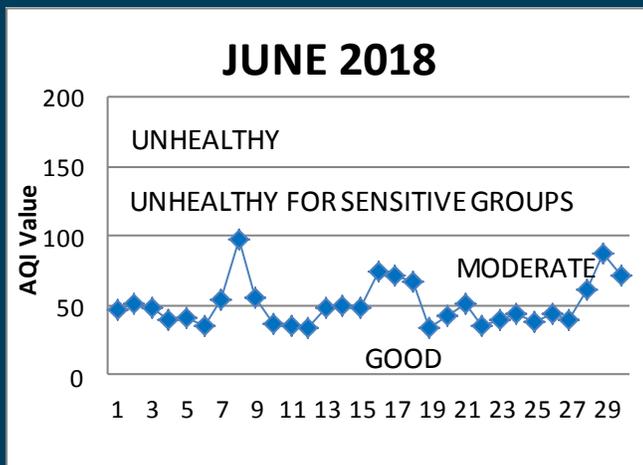
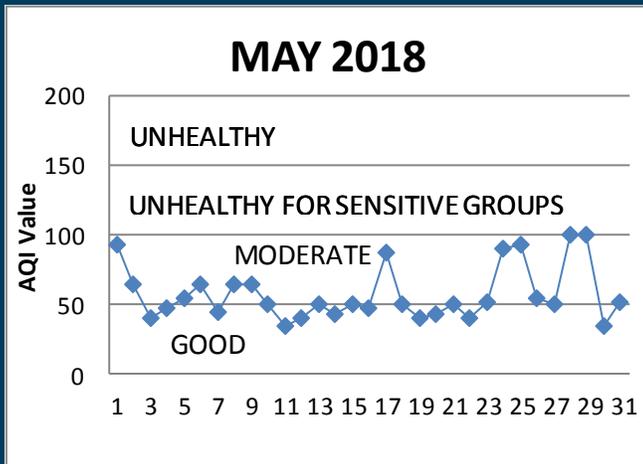
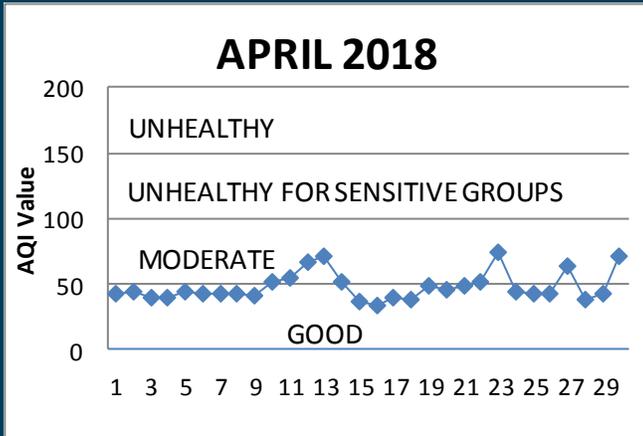
environmental issues that could trigger asthma attacks.

Continuing the collaboration, the Managing Asthma Triggers at Home (M.A.T.H) project was established to provide high-risk asthma patients (referred by ACH) with evidence based interventions to minimize asthma triggers in their homes. The project began enrollment in early July 2018. Children from Medina, Summit and Portage counties will be eligible for enrollment.

ARAQMD works hard to help ensure that outdoor air pollution continues to diminish and stays healthy for all. And, with this project, we are helping fund an initiative that could help some of the most vulnerable children in our service area breathe easier at home and at play!

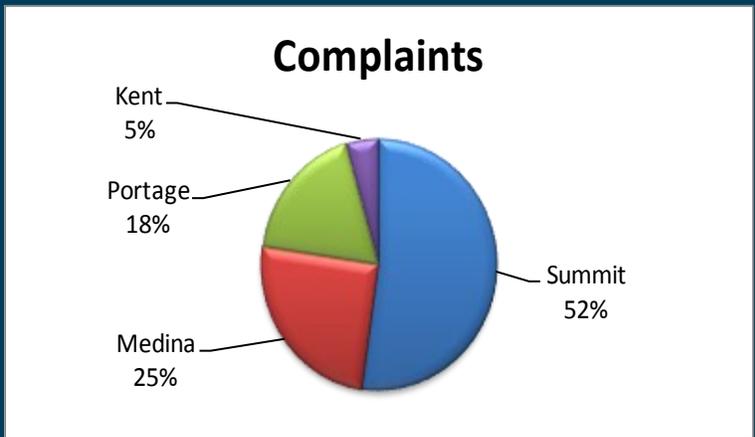
# AQ by the Numbers: Second Quarter 2018

## Air Quality Index



## Complaints & Inspections

Area/ Health District	Commercial/ Industrial	Residential	Total
Summit County	15	8	23
Medina County	4	7	11
Portage County	0	8	8
Kent	2	0	2



Site Visits	2nd Quarter 2018
FEPTIO	3
Title V	6
Non Title V	19
GDF	0
<b>Full Compliance Evaluations</b>	<b>5</b>

## Additional Stats

Permits Issued							
2nd Quarter	PTI		PTIO		TV		PBR
	Draft	Final	Draft	Final	Draft**	Final	Total
**Includes PPP & PP	0	3	3	13	5	1	4

Asbestos	
2nd Q—Notifications	69
2nd Q—Inspections	33



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A service of Summit County Public Health

## It's an Air Quality Advisory Day.....So What?!

Whether you find out on the radio, TV weather forecast or maybe you even follow ARAQMD on Facebook and see the message in your newsfeed, Air Quality Advisory Days (AQA Days) do happen throughout the year...mostly during the summer though. So, what does that mean, and what should you do or NOT do on an Air Quality Advisory Day?

AQA Days are called when weather forecasts and current air pollution issues team up to make it likely that one or more of the counties in our reporting area (Ashtabula, Cuyahoga, Geauga, Lake Lorain, Medina, Portage and Summit) will experience ozone or fine particle pollution that exceeds the allowable levels. Our AQA days usually fall in the lowest category of exceedances known as "Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups (or Populations)." But, WHO is in the "Sensitive Group?" In this case we would be referring to children, the elderly, and anyone with chronic breathing illnesses. Fine. What should those people do differently on an AQA Day? We would recommend that folks in the Sensitive Group reduce or eliminate prolonged strenuous outdoor activity. Maybe take the running workout to the treadmill. It does NOT mean anyone should barricade themselves indoors! Just take some reasonable precautions based on your own sensitivity.



OK. I'll keep the kids inside most of the day....ugh! Is there anything else? Absolutely! We ask that EVERYONE reduce the miles they drive. Maybe even take public transportation or work from home if it's an option. Delay unnecessary errands. If you do have to take the car out, don't refuel until sundown (around 8pm in the summer). And, give the lawn mower and other fuel burning yard maintenance tools the day (or days if there are multiple AQA Days called in a row) off! The grass will still be there a few days from now and your neighbors who may be in the Sensitive Group will quietly thank you for doing your part to help lessen the burden of an AQA Day for them! Follow us on Facebook (Akron Regional Air Quality Management District) to get alerted of the next AQA Day!