



**ARAQMD**  
Protecting our Air

# The Air You Breathe

A free quarterly newsletter from Akron Regional Air Quality Management District.

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SPRING 2013

## SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- Confirmation hearings are underway for US EPA Administrator.
- New Fuel & Auto Emission standards have been proposed to improve our transportation system's impact on air quality, and ultimately human health!
- Mold...the never ending story. Check out these 10 tips!

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## Nominee for US EPA Administrator

On March 4, 2013, President Barack Obama nominated Gina McCarthy to replace Lisa Jackson as head of the EPA. Currently, McCarthy is the Assistant Administrator for EPA's Office of Air and Radiation and has been a leading advocate for common-sense strategies to protect public health and the environment.



Prior to her confirmation, McCarthy served as the Commissioner of the Connecticut Department of

Environmental Protection. In her 25 year career, she has worked at both the state and local levels on critical environmental issues and helped coordinate policies on economic growth, energy, transportation and the environment.

Ms. McCarthy is seen as a strong proponent for combating climate change issues. Her nomination is considered a signal that President Obama is planning to move strongly on his State of the Union comments to have meaningful changes in combating climate change.

The Washington Times said, "By tapping Gina

McCarthy, a veteran of environmental rule-making at both federal and state levels, the White House has sent an undeniable signal to Republicans and the fossil fuels industry—the EPA will play a central role in White House efforts to battle climate change."

As a local air agency, we are excited to see a nominee that knows all the ins and outs of the "air world", and has expansive experience at multiple levels of governmental operation.

Stay tuned to see what the confirmation hearings bring!

## SO<sub>2</sub> & NO<sub>x</sub> From Power Plants Continue Decline

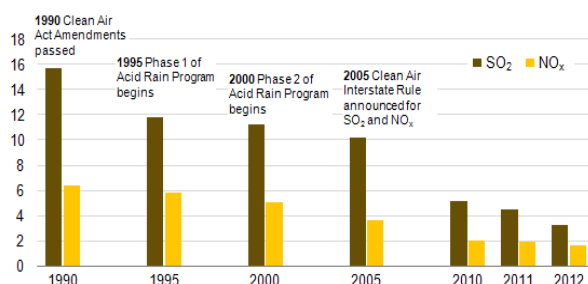
From the epa.gov web site: Emissions of sulfur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>) and nitrogen oxides (NO<sub>x</sub>) from the electric power sector in 2012 declined to their lowest level since the passage of the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990. The decline in emissions is due primarily to an increasing

number of coal-fired units retrofitted with flue-gas desulfurization (FGD), or scrubbers, to coal plants switching to lower sulfur

coal, and to selective catalytic reduction (SCRs), selective noncatalytic reduction (SNCR), or low NO<sub>x</sub> burners to limit NO<sub>x</sub> emissions. In recent years the decreased use of coal for electric power generation because of cheaper natural gas has also played a significant role in the SO<sub>2</sub> and NO<sub>x</sub> emissions declines.

The decline in SO<sub>2</sub> and NO<sub>x</sub> emis-

SO<sub>2</sub> and NO<sub>x</sub> emissions from the electric power sector million short tons



Continued 2

## SO<sub>2</sub> & NO<sub>x</sub> Continued

sions began soon after enactment of the 1990 Clean Air Act Amendments, which established a national cap-and-trade program for SO<sub>2</sub> and required other controls for NO<sub>x</sub> emissions from fossil-fueled electric power plants. The program was primarily motivated by concerns regarding acid rain affecting areas downwind of plants emitting these compounds. Because coal-fired units accounted for a large share of SO<sub>2</sub> and NO<sub>x</sub> emissions, the program provided an economic incentive for coal-fired power plants to reduce emissions by installing pollution control systems, burning lower sulfur coal, or, for high-emitting plants, dispatching less electricity.

In 2005, EPA developed the Clean Air Interstate Rule, a cap-and-trade program intended to reduce SO<sub>2</sub> and NO<sub>x</sub> emissions beyond the levels defined by the acid rain program in the eastern half of the United States. While that rule and several proposed alternatives have been challenged in the courts, 91 GW of coal-fired power capacity was retrofitted with FGD scrubbers between 2005 and 2011. By the end of 2011, 60% of the U.S. coal fleet had FGD scrubbers installed, and 67% had either a SCR or a SNCR installed.

Additional state requirements and settlements under the Clean Air Act's New

Source Review program also contributed to the increases in coal plant environmental retrofits. The Mercury and Air Toxics Standards, issued in 2011 and set to take effect in 2015, do not directly regulate SO<sub>2</sub> or NO<sub>x</sub> but the standards should lead coal-fired power plants to install equipment that further limits SO<sub>2</sub> emissions.

The reduction in SO<sub>2</sub> and NO<sub>x</sub> emissions through the late 2000s was primarily the result of coal plants employing strategies to reduce emissions, not a reduction in the use of coal overall. In fact, coal generation set record highs in 2007 when significant SO<sub>2</sub> reduction was already underway. Two major contributors of declining SO<sub>2</sub> and NO<sub>x</sub> emissions since late 2008 have been:

- Lower overall generation from coal in 2012
- Historically low natural gas prices, which have contributed to shifting some generation from coal to natural gas

**ARAQMD note:** Regulations are not easy to implement and can definitely be costly. But, as the chart on page one shows, the benefits are undeniable!

## ARAQMD Has a New Logo

We'd like to take a minute to introduce our new logo. We realize our formal agency name: Akron Regional Air Quality Management District is quite the moniker. Informally, the agency has been referred to by its initials for years. We



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decided to make it more official. In the near future, you may see the newest and most efficient cars in our fleet sporting this logo as a rear window decal. Our 3 new Ford Fusion Hybrids will be the first to show off our snappy new logo. We plan to add it to our other vehicles in time and as we replace current vehicles with more efficient models.

We are proud to serve Medina, Summit and Portage counties.

For weekday  
Air Quality  
Index  
updates and links to  
timely articles & info.  
like us,

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AIR QUALITY  
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# Statistic Snap Shot

## 4th Quarter 2012

### Complaints

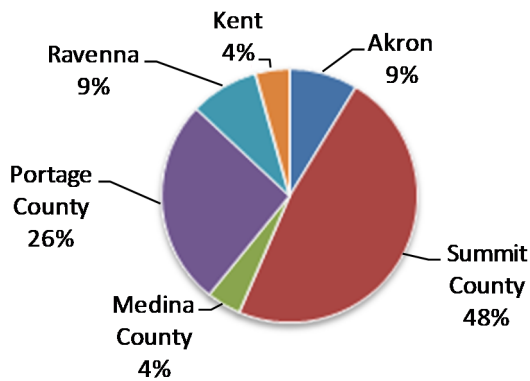
## 1st Quarter 2013

### Complaints

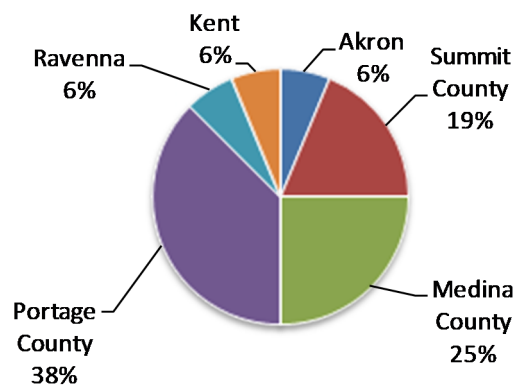
Area	Commercial/Industrial	Residential	Total
Akron	1	1	2
Summit County	3	8	11
Medina County	1	0	1
Portage County	2	4	6
Ravenna	1	1	2
Kent	1	0	1

Area	Commercial/Industrial	Residential	Total
Akron	0	1	1
Summit County	2	1	3
Medina County	3	1	4
Portage County	3	3	6
Ravenna	0	1	1
Kent	1	0	1

### 4th Quarter Complaints



### 1st Quarter Complaints



### 4th Quarter 2012 Open Burning Stats

Area	Permits Issued	Permits Denied	Notifications
Akron	0	0	2
Summit County	0	0	1
Medina County	0	0	0
Portage County	3	0	1
Ravenna	0	0	1
Kent	0	0	1

### 1st Quarter 2013 Open Burning Stats

Area	Permits Issued	Permits Denied	Notifications
Akron	0	0	0
Summit County	2	0	1
Medina County	2	1	1
Portage County	1	0	0
Ravenna	0	0	0
Kent	0	0	0

#### Asbestos

#### Visible Emissions Readings

#### Indoor Air Quality Inquiries

4th Q—Notifications	295	4th Q—4	4th Q—38
4th Q—Inspections	59	1st Q—10	1st Q—39
1st Q—Notifications	297		
1st Q—Inspections	35		

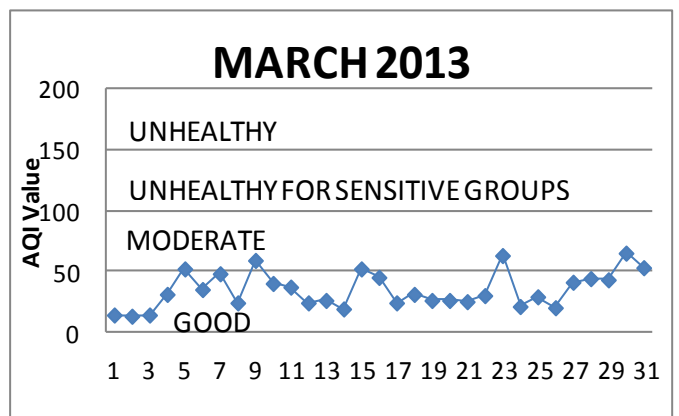
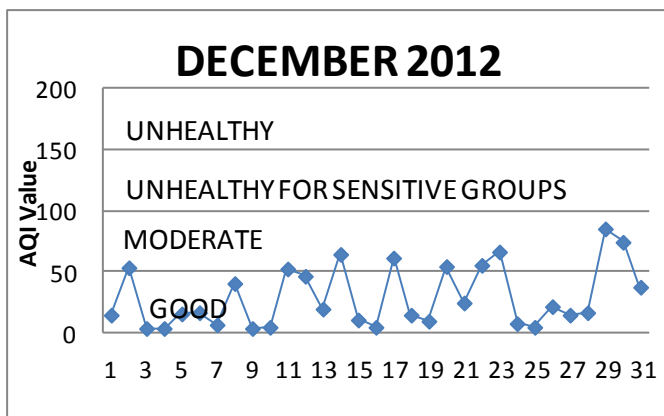
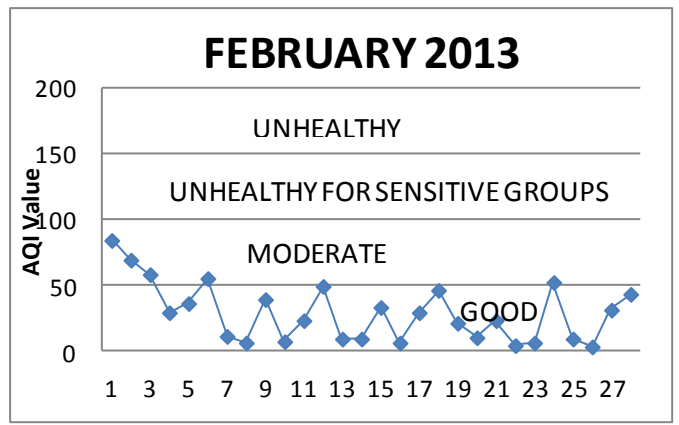
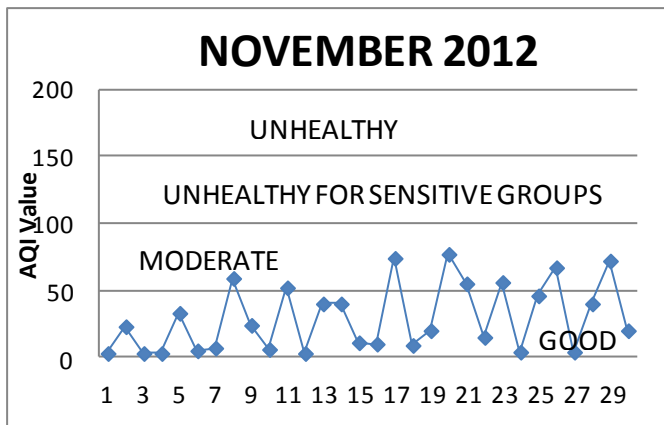
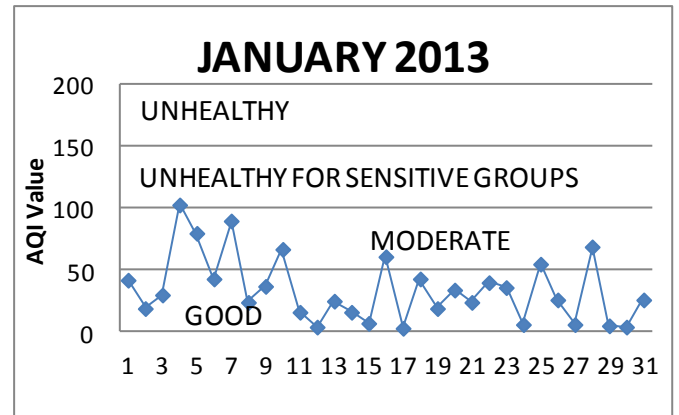
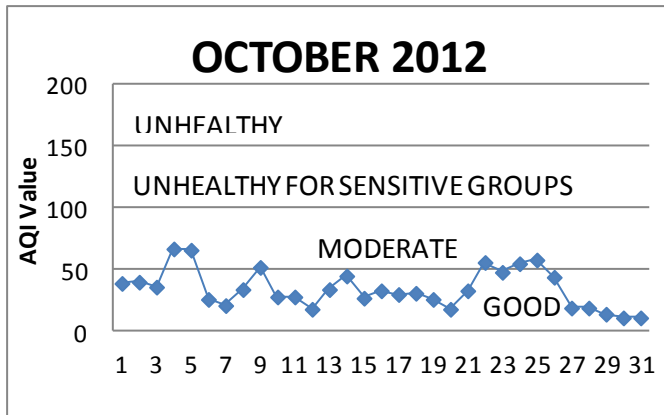
# Statistic Snap Shot

## 4th Quarter 2012

### Daily AQI

## 1st Quarter 2013

### Daily AQI



## New Fuel & Auto Emission Standards

(March 29, 2013) Based on extensive input from auto manufacturers, refiners, and states, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) today proposed sensible standards for cars and gasoline that will significantly reduce harmful pollution, prevent thousands of premature deaths and illnesses, while also enabling efficiency improvements in the cars and trucks we drive. These cleaner fuels and cars standards are an important component of the administration's national program for clean cars and trucks, which also include historic fuel efficiency standards that are saving new vehicle owners at the gas pump today.

Following a proven systems approach that addresses vehicles and fuels as an integrated system, today's proposal will enable the greatest pollution reductions at the lowest cost. The proposal will slash emissions of a range of harmful pollutants that can cause premature death and respiratory illnesses.

The proposal supports efforts by states to reduce harmful levels of smog and soot and eases their ability to attain and maintain science-based national ambient air quality standards to protect public health, while also providing flexibilities for small businesses, including hardship provisions and additional lead time for compliance.

"The Obama Administration has taken a series of steps to ... ensure that the cars of tomorrow are cleaner, more efficient and saving drivers money at the pump and these common-sense cleaner fuels and cars standards are another example of how we can protect the environment and public health in an affordable and practical way," said EPA Acting Administrator Bob Perciasepe. "Today's proposed standards – which will save thousands of lives and protect the most vulnerable -- are the next step in our work to protect public health and will provide the automotive industry with the certainty they need to offer the same car models in all 50 states.

By 2030, EPA estimates that the proposed cleaner fuels and cars program will annually prevent up to 2,400 premature deaths, 23,000 cases of respiratory ailments in children, 3,200 hospital admissions and asthma-related emergency room visits, and 1.8 million lost school days, work days and days when activities

would be restricted due to air pollution. Total health-related benefits in 2030 will be between \$8 and \$23 billion annually. The program would also reduce exposure to pollution near roads. More than 50 million people live, work, or go to school in close proximity to high-traffic roadways, and the average American spends more than one hour traveling along roads each day.

Throughout the development of the proposal, EPA met with representatives from the automotive and oil and gas industry as well as environmental, consumer advocacy and public health organizations. Based on initial feedback from these groups and a thorough rulemaking process, EPA's proposal is estimated to provide up to seven dollars in health benefits for every dollar spent to meet the standards. The proposed sulfur standards will cost refineries less than a penny per gallon of gasoline on average once the standards are fully in place. The proposed vehicle standards will have an average cost of about \$130 per vehicle in 2025.

The proposed standards will reduce gasoline sulfur levels by more than 60 percent – down to 10 parts per million (ppm) in 2017. Reducing sulfur in gasoline enables vehicle emission control technologies to perform more efficiently. This means that vehicles built prior to the proposed standards will run cleaner on the new low-sulfur gas, providing significant and immediate benefits by reducing emissions from every gas-powered vehicle on the road.

The proposal is designed to be implemented over the same timeframe as the next phase of EPA's national program to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from cars and light trucks beginning in model year 2017. Together, the federal and California standards will maximize reductions in GHGs, air pollutants and air toxics from cars and light trucks while providing automakers regulatory certainty and streamlining compliance.

Once published in the Federal Register, the proposal will be available for public comment and EPA will hold public hearings to receive further public input.

Information on EPA's notice of proposed rule-making: <http://www.epa.gov/otaq/tier3.htm>





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## Top 10 Things You Should Know About Mold

Indoor molds drive a lot of calls to our office. Lots of landlord/tenant issues. Renters with mold concerns, landlords not able/interested in fixing the problem properly. The callers are looking for someone with a set of rules/laws that can force a landlord to fix a mold problem. Unfortunately, those laws do not exist at an EPA level or at most community levels. So, in that light, it's good to occasionally review some of the facts regarding mold.

1. *Potential health effects and symptoms associated with mold exposures include allergic reactions, asthma, and other respiratory complaints.*
2. *There is no practical way to eliminate all mold and mold spores in the indoor environment; the way to control indoor mold growth is to control moisture.*
3. *If mold is a problem in your*

*home or school, you must clean up the mold and eliminate sources of moisture.*

4. *Fix the source of the water problem or leak to prevent mold growth.*
5. *Reduce indoor humidity (to 30-60%) to decrease mold growth by: venting bathrooms, dryers, and other moisture-generating sources to the outside; using air conditioners and de-humidifiers; increasing ventilation; and using exhaust fans whenever cooking, dishwashing, and cleaning.*
6. *Clean and dry any damp or wet building materials and furnishings within 24-48 hours to prevent mold growth.*
7. *Clean mold off hard surfaces with water and detergent, and dry completely. Absorbent materials such as ceiling tiles, that are moldy, may need to be replaced.*
8. *Prevent condensation: Reduce the potential for condensation on*

*cold surfaces (i.e., windows, piping, exterior walls, roof, or floors) by adding insulation.*

9. *In areas where there is a perpetual moisture problem, do not install carpeting (i.e., by drinking fountains, by classroom sinks, or on concrete floors with leaks or frequent condensation).*
10. *Molds can be found almost anywhere; they can grow on virtually any substance, providing moisture is present. There are molds that can grow on wood, paper, carpet and foods.*

For more information on mold you can log on to <http://www.epa.gov/mold/index.html> and find a wealth of good info. Be sure to read their very informative booklet: A Brief Guide to Mold, Moisture, and Your Home.

