

# The Air You Breathe

Free Quarterly Newsletter from **Akron Regional Air Quality Management District**

August 2023

Volume 38, Issue 3



## Wildfire Smoke from Canada

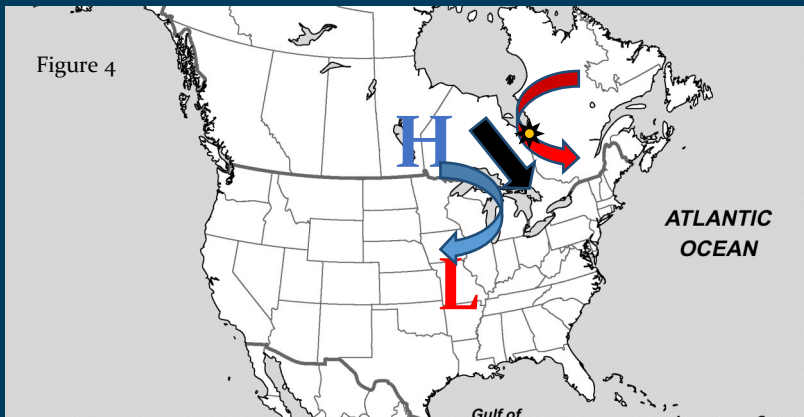
Due to a warmer and drier spring than is normally seen, major wildfires sparked near Quebec, Canada in early March, 2023. By the beginning of June, almost 150 fires were burning over roughly 5800 square miles of land. The smoke produced by these fires caused incredible amounts of particulate matter to be released into the air. The early June pollution was carried by the winds to the Northeast and made international news, as New York City experienced the worst air quality in the world. Here in the ARAQMD region, we saw air pollution over our normal levels. Figure 1 shows the first week of June with a spiking up of PM<sub>2.5</sub> from June 5 through June 9.

Our normal daily concentrations are almost always below the National Ambient Air Quality Standard (NAAQS) of 35 ug/m<sup>3</sup> for fine particulate matter (PM<sub>2.5</sub>). Since 2000, 95% of our daily Air Quality Index (AQI) has been either Good or Moderate. The AQI is a method of relating air pollution concentrations into an easy to understand method of conveying health risks from (usually) invisible air pollutants. The AQI is categorized as good, moderate, unhealthy for sensitive groups, unhealthy, very unhealthy and hazardous.

Figure 2 shows the percent of days in each category from 2000 through the middle of July 2023.

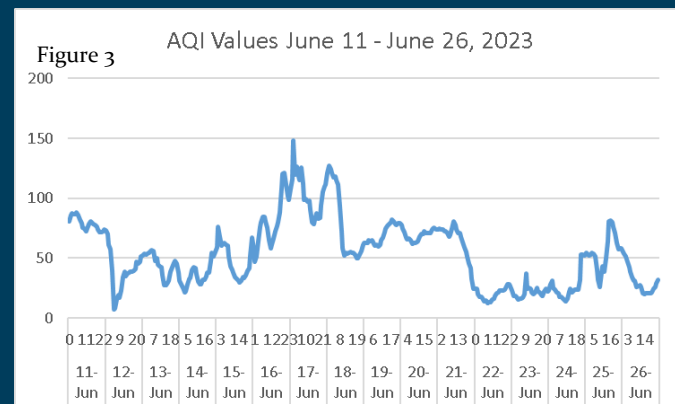
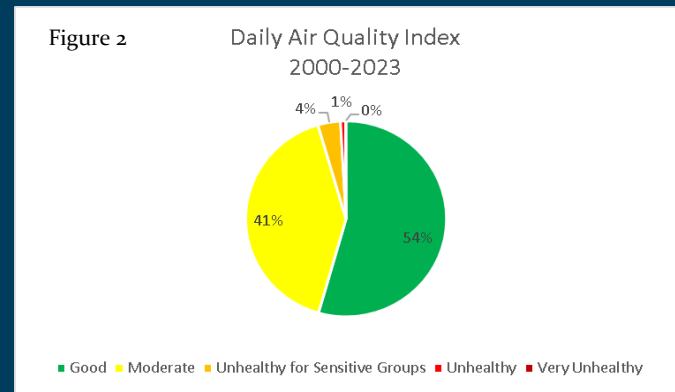
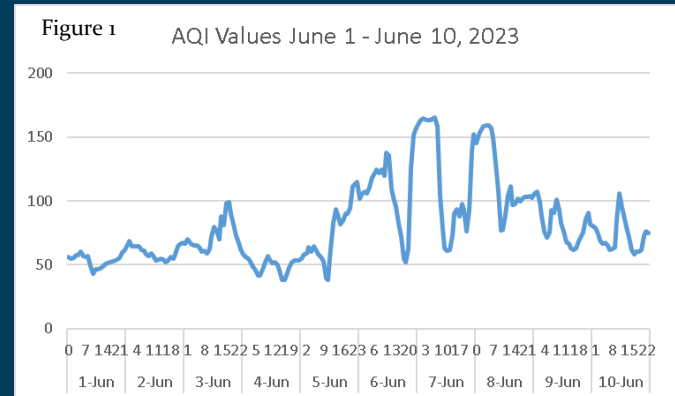
The AQI returned to summertime normal values for the middle of June, as seen in Figure 3.

In the early hours of June 27, two pressure systems moved into position to drive smoke from the fires to the upper Midwest, which includes the ARAQMD region as depicted in Figure 4 below.



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# Wildfire Smoke Cont'd

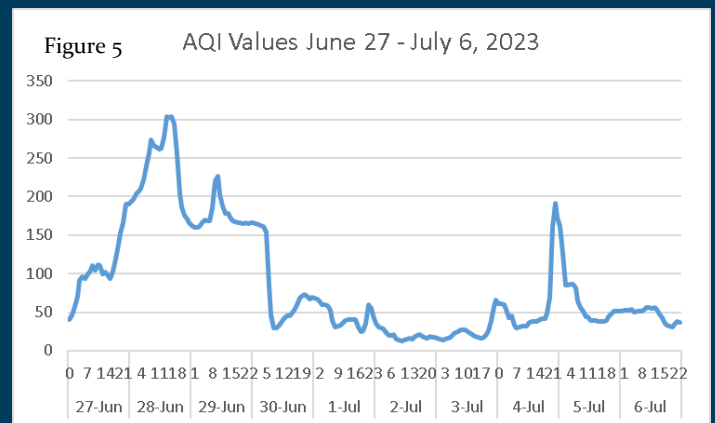
Everyone from Iowa to Ohio saw extremely high levels of particulate matter from the smoke being drawn directly our way. Chicago was described as having the worst air quality in the world on June 27. The Ohio EPA issued an air quality advisory for the entire state as there were large portions of the state were measuring "Very Unhealthy" air.

Here in the ARAQMD region, we saw extremely high levels too as seen in Figure 5

Going back to our normal levels of PM2.5, 95% of the time, we see air quality in the good or moderate range. We moved into Hazardous air quality on June 28. We had air quality that was unhealthy or worse for the majority of two days. The air was thick, foggy and smelled like burned plastic. People experienced breathing problems if they ventured outside.

Everyone can find out what the AQI is by going to the USEPA's website or app, (<http://airnow.gov>), or the ARAQMD website (<https://www.scpd.org/air-quality>). Another useful function of AirNow is the Fire and Smoke map which shows where smoke is blowing in a graphical representation.

By using the information available, we can make the best decisions to protect our health and the health of those around us. Although we normally have great air quality here, sometimes events occur that push bad air our way. In those times, check in to the websites listed above or give us a call at 330-375-2480.



## Simplified GHG Emissions Calculator

EPA's Center for Corporate Climate Leadership is pleased to announce its [Simplified GHG Emissions Calculator](#) has been updated. The EPA Simplified GHG Emissions Calculator is designed as a simplified calculation tool to help small business and low emitter organizations estimate and inventory their annual GHG emissions. The calculator will determine the direct and indirect emissions from all sources at an organization when activity data are entered into the various sections of the workbook for one annual period.

Updates to the calculator include:

- Addition of more fuel types for stationary combustion to be more comprehensive and align with [EPA's GHG Emission Factors Hub](#).
- Emissions factors that align with the 2023 update of the GHG Emission Factors Hub,
- CBECs 2018 data, and building energy intensity factors.
- Ability to enter 2021-2023 vehicle models (the 2020 data year is the latest included in the 2023 GHG Emission Factor Hub, so emissions for 2021-2023 model years are equal to 2020 data).
- New explanatory notes in places for clarification.

[Download the updated calculator.](#)

## USEPA Launches EJSCREEN 2.2

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has updated [EJScreen](#), the Agency's publicly available environmental justice (EJ) screening and mapping tool. EJScreen 2.2 makes important improvements to better meet the needs of users, including a redesigned and enhanced report, a new environmental indicator with corresponding indexes, and refreshed demographic and environmental data.

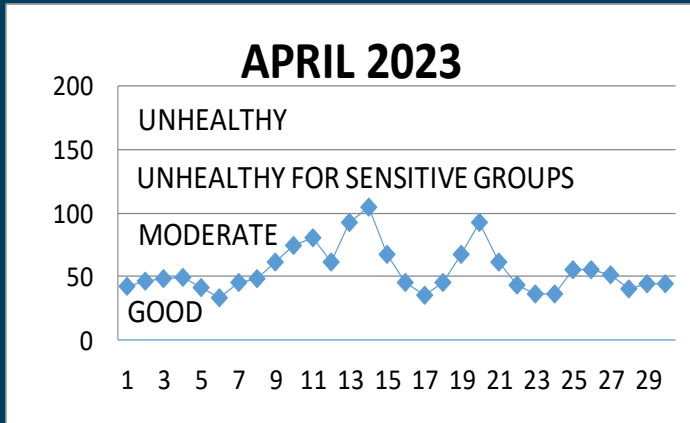
EJScreen 2.2 features new map layers on health disparities including cancer and persons with disabilities; critical service gaps on accessibility to housing, health insurance, transportation; and EPA regulated facilities that are currently or have been out of compliance with environmental laws and regulations.

The public can talk with EPA EJScreen experts on August 16th at 12pm EST about many topics including how to use and apply the tool, technical issues, and any other questions. [Click here to join the discussion.](#)

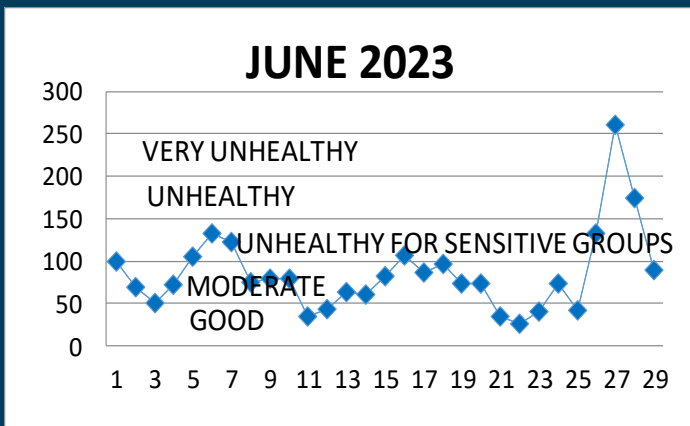
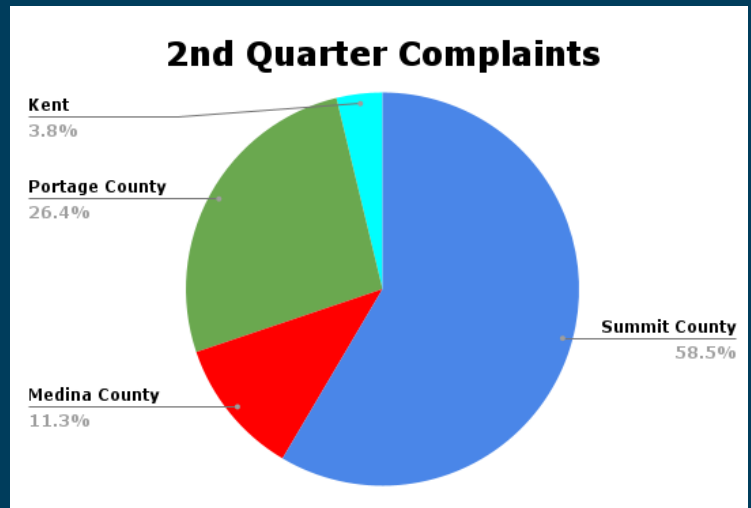
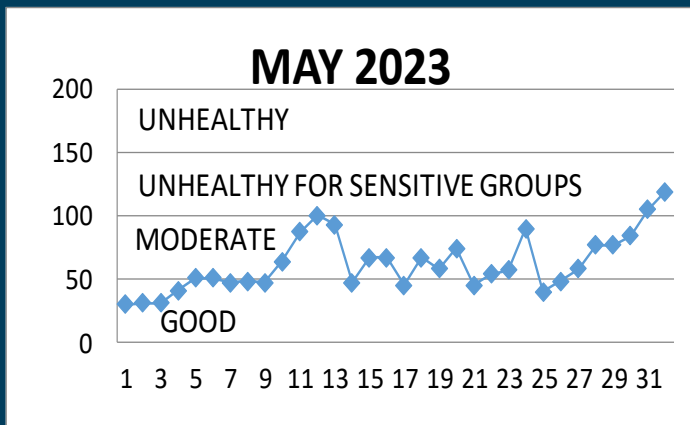
# AQ by the Numbers: 2nd Quarter 2023

## Air Quality Index

## Complaints & Inspections



Area/ Health District	Commercial/ Industrial	Residential	Total
Summit County	13	18	31
Medina County	4	2	6
Portage County	5	9	14
Kent	1	1	2



Site Visits	2nd Quarter 2023
FEPTIO	7
Title V	4
Non Title V	34
Full Compliance Evaluations	31

## Additional Stats

Permits Issued							
2nd Quarter 2023	Permit to Install		Permit to Install & Operate		Title V		Permit by Rule
	Draft	Final	Draft	Final	Draft**	Final	
**Includes - Preliminary Proposed Permits & Proposed Permits	0	0	4	22	2	1	12

Asbestos	
2nd Q- Notifications	37
2nd Q- Inspections	14



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## EPA Releases Annual Air Report

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) released its annual interactive report tracking America's progress in controlling air pollution. "Our Nation's Air: Trends Through 2022" offers readers an opportunity to learn about the health and environmental impacts of air pollution; track trends in air quality and emissions data, explore efforts to improve visibility in treasured national parks; and explore community-level health impacts of air toxics emissions reported for 2020.

"This report highlights the crucial role EPA's work – coupled with the unrelenting efforts of our state, tribal, community and industry partners – have played in improving air quality across the country," said EPA Administrator Michael S. Regan. "Even as the economy grows, we continue to see dramatic long-term reductions in air emissions. This progress is encouraging, and we will continue to collaborate with our partners to protect public health and ensure clean air for all."

EPA examines long-term trends to track the nation's progress toward clean air. The report released today shows that, between 1970 and 2022, the combined emissions of six key pollutants dropped by 78%, while the U.S. economy remained strong —growing 304% over the same time.

The report includes interactive graphics that enable citizens, policymakers and stakeholders to view and download detailed information by pollutant, geographic location and year.

Find the report here: <https://gispub.epa.gov/air/trendsreport/2023/#home>

### Air Quality Trends Show Clean Air Progress

While some pollutants continue to pose serious air quality problems in areas of the U.S., nationally, criteria air pollutant concentrations have dropped significantly since 1990 improving quality of life for many Americans. Air quality improves as America grows.

