



Ozone & Particulate Matter

What Is The Difference Between Ozone and Particulate Matter (soot)?

Ozone makes it difficult to breathe. It occurs in the summer months on hot, still, muggy days when motor vehicle traffic and industrial sources allow the ozone to form.

Particulate matter (PM2.5) (particulate matter smaller than 2.5 microns, or 1/20th the width of a human hair) can cause fatal lung diseases. PM2.5 occurs all year round, with high points in Northeast Ohio in the summer months and the winter months. Vehicles, industry, diesel equipment, agriculture, and even simply blowing dust, dirt, or road salt causes PM2.5.

Has Northeast Ohio Attained The National Health Standards For Either Pollutant?

No. The United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) designated the counties of Ashtabula, Cuyahoga, Geauga, Lake, Lorain, Medina, Portage, and Summit as in nonattainment for the new 8-hour ozone standard.

The USEPA designated Ashtabula (partial), Cuyahoga, Lake, Lorain, Medina, Portage, and Summit as in nonattainment for the new fine particulate (PM2.5) standard.

These designations require the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency, with local input, to submit State Implementation Plans (SIPs) to USEPA that would bring Northeast Ohio into attainment for both of these pollutants. NOACA is hosting a public participation process to discuss the possible solutions to these two air quality problems, both of which have a strong linkage to car and truck traffic.

Does NOACA's Ozone Action Day Program Also Forecast PM2.5 Pollution Advisory Days?

Not at this time, as the forecasting software and methods are still being developed by USEPA. However, locally, the City of Cleveland posts real-time PM2.5 readings to its **"Cleveland Air Quality Index" Hotline at (216) 441-7474**, five days per week. Readings begin being posted before 8 a.m. Monday through Friday.

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