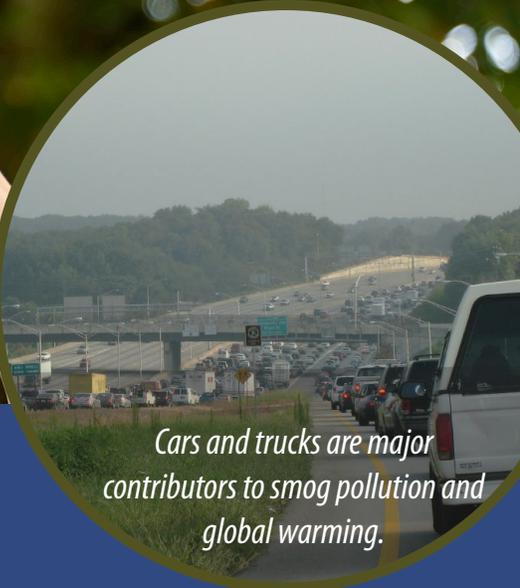




Smog and particulate pollution cause a host of health problems, including asthma, permanent damage to lung tissue, heart attacks and strokes.



Cars and trucks are major contributors to smog pollution and global warming.

Trouble in the Air

Millions of Americans Breathe Polluted Air

People across America regularly breathe unhealthy air that increases their risk of premature death, asthma attacks and other adverse health impacts. To safeguard public health, the nation needs to preserve and strengthen existing air quality protections at the federal and state level and move to reduce the future air pollution threats posed by global warming.

Air Pollution Harms Our Health

Burning fossil fuels such as coal, diesel, gasoline and natural gas creates air pollution.

- Smog causes respiratory problems, including asthma, increased risk of infection, and permanent damage to lung tissue.
- Particulate pollution (PM_{2.5}) can cause similar respiratory damage as well as cardiovascular problems such as heart attacks, strokes and congestive heart failure. Particulate pollution has also been shown to trigger premature birth and raise the risk of autism.
- Levels of air pollution that meet current federal air quality standards can be harmful to health. Researchers have detected negative health impacts, such as increased premature deaths, among people exposed to pollution at levels the EPA currently considers “good” or “moderate.”

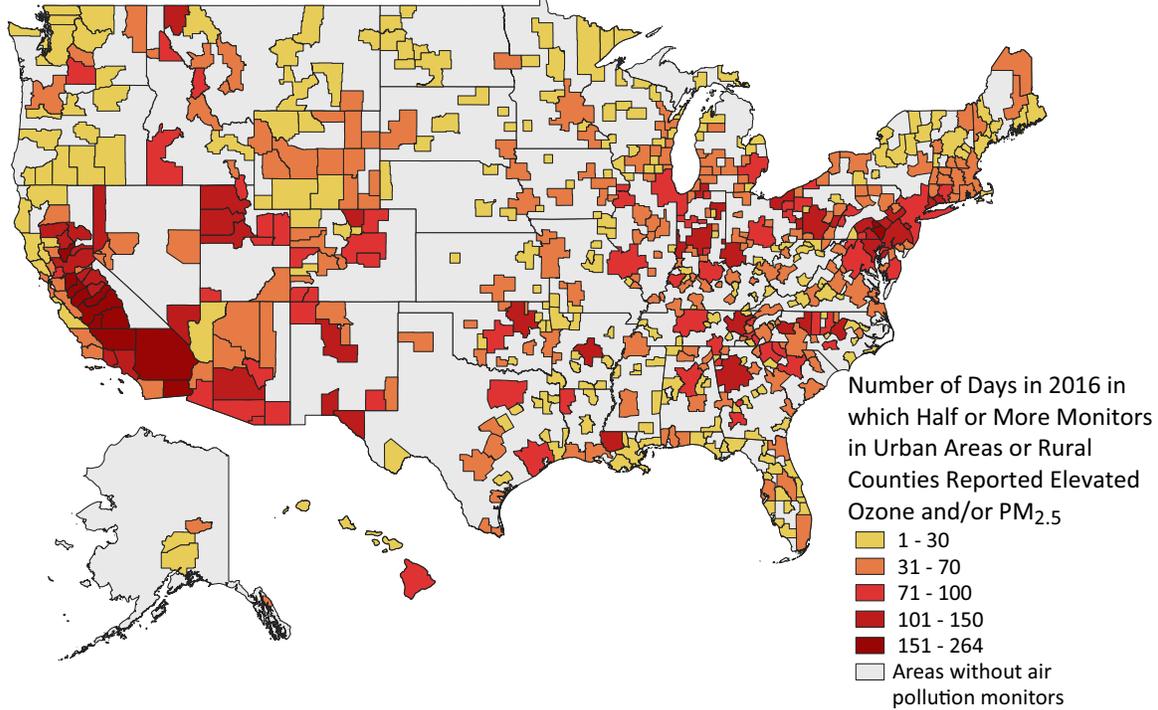
Air Pollution across the U.S.

Millions of Americans live in urban and rural areas that experience frequent smog and/or particulate pollution.

- 56 metropolitan and micropolitan areas and four rural counties experienced more than 100 days in 2016 on which smog and/or particulate pollution was “moderate” or higher – in other words, at levels that studies have suggested can harm respiratory health. 73 million Americans live in those areas.
- Another 241 urban areas and 42 rural counties faced 31 to 100 days – a month or more – of smog and/or particulate pollution at the “moderate” level or above. These places are home to 173 million Americans.

For more information, please visit www.environmentamericacenter.org

Both Urban and Rural Areas Experienced Frequent Smog and Particulate Pollution in 2016



Global Warming May Worsen Air Pollution

Global warming threatens to exacerbate the nation's smog and particulate pollution problems. Temperatures will rise, speeding up the chemical reactions that create smog. Altered wind patterns may increase the number of days with stagnant air that prevents dilution of contaminants. Wildfires, which generate particulate pollution and smog precursors that can travel hundreds of miles, are predicted to become more frequent and intense.

One study estimates that global warming will increase the number of air pollution related deaths if no measures are implemented to counteract global warming's impact on air quality. That analysis estimates that 8,000 more Americans may die prematurely in the year 2030 from smog and particulate pollution than would be the case without global warming.

The U.S. Global Change Research Program has concluded that global warming will make it more difficult to control smog pollution, and that maintaining current pollution levels in a warmer world will require reduced emissions of the chemicals that form smog.

Policy Recommendations

To reduce the pollution that threatens the health of people across the country, and to avoid global warming-related increases in air pollution in the future, the nation should:

- Defend and build upon improvements in air quality achieved through rules implementing the Clean Air Act. Maintaining those gains already achieved through implementation of the Clean Air Act and seeking greater emission reductions are crucial for ensuring that Americans can breathe cleaner air.
- Strengthen federal fuel economy standards for cars and light trucks. These standards are critical to the nation's efforts to reduce global warming pollution from passenger vehicles.
- Continue to allow states to adopt stronger standards for pollution from vehicles to further reduce global warming emissions and health-threatening air pollution. The clean car standards pioneered by 13 states plus the District of Columbia have been highly effective in reducing pollution.
- Support policies at every level of government to reduce global warming pollution, including increasing the use of wind, solar and other forms of clean energy and placing state and regional limits on climate pollution.

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