

The Air You Breathe

Free Quarterly Newsletter from Akron Regional Air Quality Management District

November 2021

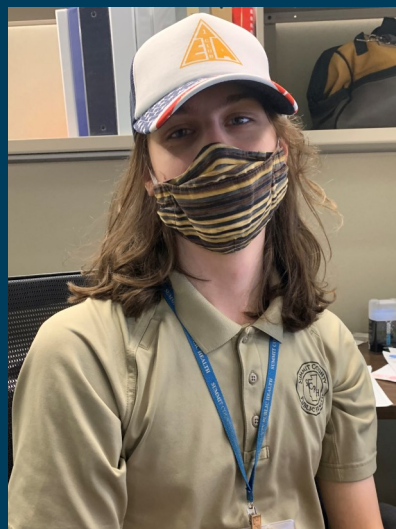
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Back to School...Smoke School

So exactly what IS Smoke School? Smoke school is the process of being trained and certified to observe the opacity of visible emissions. Using a custom smoke generator, students are shown various opacities of black and white smoke and tested on their observational accuracy. Smoke school is also known as EPA Method 9 Certification, Visible Emissions Training and Opacity Training. Smoke school consists of two parts; lecture and the field certification test. Field certification is required twice annually (every 6 months) and the classroom lecture is recommended to be repeated approximately every three years.

As with most areas of life, COVID-19 showed up and disrupted our ability to attend any in person trainings or testing. The last time the team was able to attend smoke school in person was in the fall of 2019...two very long years ago!

Our team attended the Akron-area testing in September 2021 and did a smashing job. The company that runs the testing for our area gives people who pass both black & white smoke readings on the first run of the day a reward...the coveted "smoke school hat." Several of our long time staff members have, well, dozens of these hats. In the photo to the left you'll see one of our newer air quality engineers, Connor, modeling his hat from this fall.



Our staff continuously strives for excellence in all the areas of air quality permitting, monitoring and enforcement work we do. Keeping our skills up to date and our eyes sharp are a top priority for ARAQMD.

To learn more about the smoke school process you can go to Eastern Technical Associate's website at: <https://www.eta-is-opacity.com/>



in this issue

- Back to Smoke School P.1
- New Staff Member P.1
- Important Updates P.2
- OEPA Remote Work P.2
- Wise Fire Pit Use P.2
- AQ by the Numbers P.3
- Admire Fall Leaves P.4

New Staff Welcome!

In September, ARAQMD welcomed Tyson Cramer as our newest staff member on our monitoring team. He joins us with over 20 years of public health experience in fields as diverse as food safety and water & clinical lab work.

When asked what was the most interesting thing he'd learned in air quality to date, he replied "understanding how the cyclone process in our particle pollution monitors work."

Tyson is a Cleveland Browns & Guardians (Indians) fan. Here's hoping the Browns finish strong this year!!



Welcome to ARAQMD, Tyson! We are happy you've joined us.

OAC 3745-31 Review & Engineering Guide Updates

Several important reviews and proposed/actual updates to both the OAC 3745-31 and Engineering Guides happened in the third quarter of 2021.

The Ohio Environmental Protection Agency, Division of Air Pollution Control has reviewed OAC Chapter 3745-31 “Permits-to-Install New Sources and Permit-to-Install and Operate Program” pursuant to Ohio law (Ohio Revised Code Section 106.03) which requires all agencies to review existing rules every five years to determine if the rules should be eliminated or amended or remain as-is. Ohio EPA has reviewed the rules in this chapter and determined that changes are needed. You can find the synopsis of the proposed updates at: https://www.epa.state.oh.us/Portals/27/regs/3745-31/3745-31_SYN_IP.pdf. While the public comment period for these changes has passed, it is still advisable to be familiarized with the proposed updates.

Additionally, Engineering Guide 73 was updated in August 2021 and Engineering Guide 94 was released in early September 2021. You can find all the Engineering Guides at: <https://www.epa.ohio.gov/dapc/engineer/equides>.

Ohio EPA Staff to Continue Remote Work

In a September update from Ohio EPA Director Laurie Stevenson, staff was informed that the planned return to the office date of October 4, 2021 was being adjusted. The current voluntary and rotating cohort approach will be extended through the end of the calendar year. The agency plans to assess the evolving state of the pandemic and determine the new date when staff will be required to return to the office in pre-pandemic fashion.

Staff that have returned in cohort groups or those that need to access the agency’s buildings, labs, etc. for core function work will continue to conduct these activities.

Ohio EPA has been steadfast in their efforts to maintain staff safety and wellness throughout the pandemic while maintaining a high level of service.



Laurie Stevenson,
Ohio EPA Director

Use That Fire Pit Wisely

As patio fire pits and outdoor fireplaces grow in popularity, so does backyard burning. Homeowners enjoy fire pits and outdoor fireplaces for warmth, recreation and cooking. Increase your enjoyment of outdoor fires by knowing you’re doing all you can to burn cleanly, safely, and responsibly for your family, neighbors and community.



Smoke from burning wood is made up of a complex mixture of gases and fine particles, which are also called particle pollution or particulate matter. Outdoor recreational fires can become a considerable source of fine-particle air pollution – especially in some metro areas. Children and teenagers, older adults, and people with heart or lung disease – including asthma and COPD – can be particularly sensitive to the health effects of particle pollution in wood smoke.

Be a good neighbor when burning and consider your neighbors, as well as wind direction.

You can learn more about wood smoke, health impacts of wood smoke, and ways to use your fire pit wisely at:

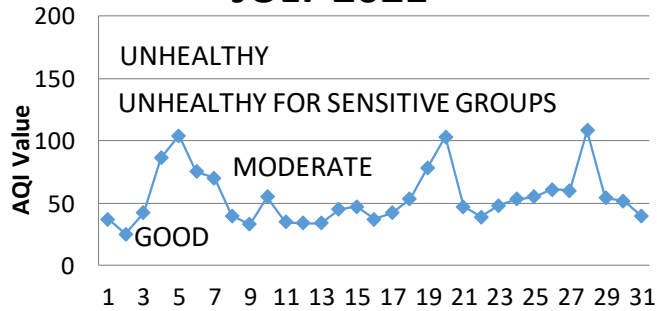
<https://www.epa.gov/burnwise/backyard-recreational-fires>

AQ by the Numbers: 3rd Quarter 2021

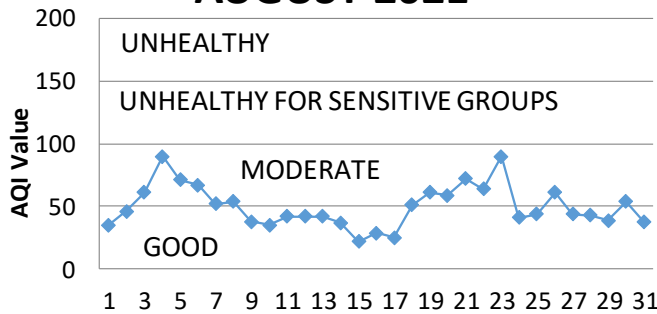
Air Quality Index

Complaints & Inspections

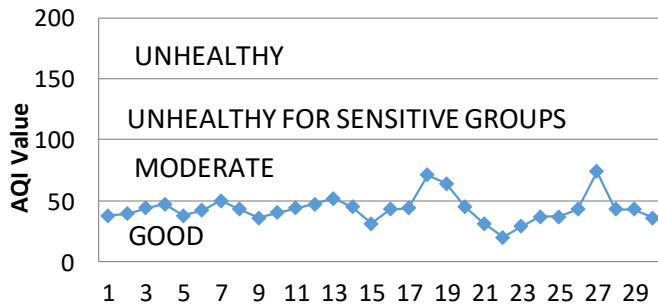
JULY 2021



AUGUST 2021

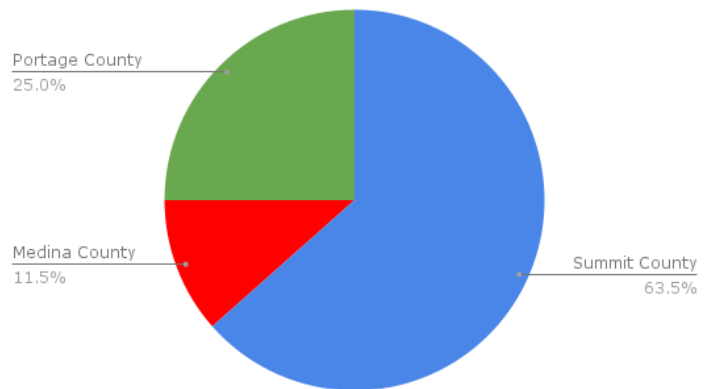


SEPTEMBER 2021



Area/ Health District	Commercial/ Industrial	Residential	Total
Summit County	13	10	33
Medina County	2	4	6
Portage County	5	8	13
Kent	0	0	0

3rd Quarter Complaints



Site Visits*	3rd Quarter 2021
FEPTIO	10
Title V	4
Non Title V	26
Full Compliance Evaluations	7

*virtual or limited in person visits per OEPA

Additional Stats

Permits Issued

3rd Quarter 2021	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	2	33	4	2	8

Asbestos

3rd Q—Notifications	38
3rd Q—Inspections	7*

*limited due to restrictions from OEPA



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A service of Summit County Public Health

Fall Leaves: To Admire...Not to Burn

Mother Nature has put on quite a colorful display for northeast Ohio this year. Sadly, all these pretty leaves will fall to the ground and provide homeowners with a mess to clean up.

Many communities around the area have “leaf pick up” days for their residents. Simply rake and haul the leaves to the curb or street side and a truck will come and haul them away. Some communities provide a way to bag leaves and label the yard waste for removal with a special pick up.

However, some residents may live in communities where no leaf removal is available. For some, the most obvious choice for disposing of the leaves is piling them up and starting a fire. Besides the potential fire hazard, there are air quality reasons why this is not an acceptable way to remove the leaves from your property.



The open burning of leaves produces particulate matter and hydrocarbons, which contain a number of toxic, irritant, and carcinogenic (cancer-causing) compounds. Burning leaves also creates carbon monoxide. Additionally, the visible smoke from leaf burning is composed of tiny particles that contain a number of pollutants. If inhaled, these microscopic particles can reach the deepest regions of the lung and remain there for months or even years. Breathing particulate matter can increase the chances of respiratory infection, reduce the volume of air inhaled and impair the lungs' ability to use that air. Particulate matter can also trigger asthma attacks in some people. Leaf smoke, as well as smoke from any open burning, can trigger health problems in vulnerable populations such as the

chronically ill, the very young and the very oldest members of our communities.

Consider starting a compost pile for your leaves and small yard waste or fruit & vegetable kitchen scraps. This compost makes great food for spring planting! If you are unable to compost yourself, consider locating a local company that will use the materials to feed their own compost. This option is the friendliest to the Air You Breathe!