

Pittsburgh and most of U.S. experiencing rising levels of microscopic soot pollution

New Clearing the Air 5.0 report analyzes the region's air quality

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EINPresswire.com/ -- Pittsburgh and most big-city regions in the U.S. would not meet the new EPA standard for microscopic soot pollution based on the latest 2023 air quality data.

The logo for Pittsburgh Works Together, with 'PITTSBURGH' in a large, bold, sans-serif font, 'WORKS' in a larger, bolder, sans-serif font, and 'TOGETHER' in a smaller, bold, sans-serif font below it.

Pittsburgh Works Together, an economic development alliance of business and organized labor locals.

That's one key finding of [Clearing the Air 5.0](#), the annual assessment of Pittsburgh's air quality prepared by Pittsburgh Works Together based on the EPA's most recent data. The report finds that the air in the Pittsburgh region remains fairly typical of major metro regions – better than some places, worse than others.

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*Jeff Nobers, Executive Director
of Pittsburgh Works Together*

For instance, Nashville, one of the country's hottest tourist destinations, has higher levels of both ozone and the microscopic pollutant known as PM2.5, according to EPA data.

Average PM2.5 levels in the United States have been generally increasing since 2019, most recently in part because of smoke from last year's Canadian wildfires. At the same time, the EPA this year lowered the PM2.5 standard from 12 micrograms per cubic meter to 9.

Most of the largest metro regions in the country, including

Pittsburgh, would not meet that standard based on their 2021-2023 readings. That includes eight of the 10 largest metro areas (including Philadelphia) and all three major markets in Ohio: Cleveland, Columbus, and Cincinnati.

Other key findings of Clearing the Air 5.0 include:

- The Pittsburgh region in 2023 complied with all federal Clean Air Act standards.
- The Pittsburgh region is among the big-city regions with the lowest levels of ozone, which can

trigger respiratory problems, especially for children, the elderly, and people of all ages with asthma or other lung diseases.

□ The PM2.5 increases in Allegheny County were lower than the average increase in the rest of the EPA Northeast region of which Pittsburgh is a part.

The report notes that while many of the findings shine a light on the improvement in the region's air quality over the past 20 years, there is still further work that can be done to make improvements.

"As our research over the past few years has demonstrated, the air quality in the Pittsburgh region has made significant strides and is similar to the air in other major metro areas.," said Jeff Nobers, Executive Director of Pittsburgh Works Together. "This is not to say that we don't have continuing work to do in protecting our environment, but we need our efforts and decisions to be based on facts – not misinformation and hyperbole."

To read the executive summary of the report, please visit www.pghworks.com/clearing-the-air-report.

To download the full report, please visit https://pghworks.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/PGHWorks_AirQualityReport_5.0_Web.pdf.

About Pittsburgh Works Together

Pittsburgh Works Together is a business-organized labor-workforce-economic development alliance working to grow jobs and expand the industries that are the foundation of our economy, including energy, manufacturing, and construction, to provide opportunity for all residents. To learn more, please visit www.pghworks.com.

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