



About Our Agency

A MESSAGE FROM SPOKANE REGIONAL CLEAN AIR AGENCY

BACKGROUND

Since 1969, Spokane Regional Clean Air Agency (Spokane Clean Air) has been working to achieve and maintain clean air in Spokane County, Washington. We administer local, state and federal air quality laws and regulations and provide programs and services to achieve our mission to preserve, protect, and enhance Spokane County's air resources for current and future generations.

We carry out our work with the support of our member entities, which includes Spokane County and its incorporated cities and towns of Spokane, Spokane Valley, Airway Heights, Cheney, Deer Park, Latah, Liberty Lake, Medical Lake, Millwood, Rockford, Spangle, and Waverly.

History

The 1967 Clean Air Act of Washington, (RCW Chapter 70A.15, Section 1510) authorizes the legislative authority of any county to activate an air pollution control authority. There are currently seven such authorities in Washington state. Counties without an activated authority are served by the Washington State Department of Ecology.

Board of Directors

Spokane Clean Air's Board of Directors consists of one County Commissioner, one representative from each of the two largest cities, a representative of the County's small cities and towns, and a member-at-large. Members serve a minimum term of four years. Current members:

Al French, Spokane County representative, Chair
Jim Simon, City of Spokane representative, Vice Chair
Tom Brattebo, Member-at-Large
Kevin Freeman, Small Cities & Towns representative
Rod Higgins, City of Spokane Valley representative

Unless otherwise publicized, the Board meets on the first Thursday of each month at 9:30 a.m.. Meetings are held in-person at Spokane Clean Air's office, 1610 S. Technology Blvd, Suite 101, Spokane, WA. There is a remote option as well, with links provided on the monthly agendas, which are posted a week prior to each meeting at SpokaneCleanAir.org.

Advisory Council

A 9-member volunteer Advisory Council is appointed by the Board to provide advice on air pollution policies, regulations, and programs. Council members bring diverse perspectives to issues based on their areas of expertise, including agriculture, chemistry, environment, fire protection, industry, public health, and the business community.

Key Agency Programs

- Operating a 24-hour air quality monitoring network to gather ambient air quality data representative of Spokane County's airshed. Data is used to report current Air Quality, determine a 2-day air quality forecast, issue temporary restrictions on wood burning, and to evaluate compliance with national, health-based pollution standards and to evaluate the effectiveness of pollution control strategies.
- Registering and inspecting over 600 commercial and industrial operations to ensure their operations are in compliance with air quality regulations.
- Reducing wintertime wood smoke pollution. Grants funds enable us to help residents replace old, inefficient wood heating devices with improved, less polluting systems for warm homes and clean heat.
- Responding to air quality complaints from citizens. Most complaints are about illegal outdoor fires, odors, smoke and other air quality nuisances.
- Implementing these and other programs to meet and maintain federal air quality standards.

Agency Funding

Spokane Clean Air's budget for Fiscal Year 2024 is approximately \$2.9 million. Funding comes from a variety of sources, including state and federal grants, and fees for certain services.

Local funding comes from an annual assessment that Spokane County and its cities and towns pay on behalf of their citizens. The assessment is based on a formula outlined in the state's Clean Air Act.

Spokane Clean Air's Board of Directors believes that a fully-funded, technically-capable, and locally-controlled air quality agency is necessary to the environmental and economic health of Spokane County.

Agency Organization

Spokane Clean Air employs a professional staff of 19 FTEs to provide technical, engineering, compliance, outreach, and administrative services. Below are key duties in these areas:

Compliance: Conducts inspections, responds to air quality complaints, performs routine surveillance, and enforces air pollution regulations.

Engineering: Reviews facility permit applications and assists businesses in their understanding of the regulations and in their selection of control technologies.

Technical Services: Operates and maintains the air monitoring network, conducts data analysis and quality assurance, develops rules, and provides internal computer services.

Communication & Outreach: Develops programs to inform, educate, and engage with local residents and businesses about air quality and agency programs and services.

Administrative: Provides human resources, accounting and budgeting, grants and records management and a variety of specialized clerical assistance.

State & Federal Air Quality Agencies

Ecology is the principal environmental management agency for the state. Ecology is headquartered in Lacey, with regional offices in Spokane, Yakima and Bellevue. For more information, visit ecology.wa.gov or call their Spokane office at (509) 329-3400.

EPA develops national programs, technical policies, and regulations for controlling air pollution. EPA sets limits on acceptable concentrations of air pollutants for the entire United States. EPA delegates to states and tribes, responsibility for issuing permits, monitoring ambient air, and compliance assurance. For more information, visit www.epa.gov.

Impacts of Not Meeting Air Quality Standards

Spokane County is currently in attainment with the health-based, National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS). EPA is mandated under the Federal Clean Air Act to review NAAQS every five years to consider emerging information regarding health effects. Continuing to meet the health-based standards is critical and requires ongoing work.

When NAAQS are not met, it can impact the region in the following ways:

- **Public Health** - pollution exposure, property values, relocation
- **Economic Impact on Business** - more stringent regulation, expensive pollution controls, affects expansion, new businesses
- **Local Government** - costs to implement plans, community stigma, growth limiter

For more information, please contact us at the phone number or website listed in the footer below.