

Sydney's air quality Summer 2019

We recognise that good air quality is important for everyone. As our population continues to grow, we are committed to maintaining high air quality standards.

Sydney's air quality is good by world standards¹, according to international comparisons by the World Health Organisation who set guidelines.



Air pollution

We measure air pollution in Australia by six main air pollutants; carbon monoxide, nitrogen dioxide, photochemical oxidants, sulphur dioxide, lead and particles. Nitric oxide is not harmful to health at typical ambient levels. Of all the pollutants assessed, PM_{2.5} (tiny particles of matter, one-fortieth the width of a hair) is considered to present the greatest potential impact to our health.

Australian standards

In Australia we have strict regulations and standards regarding air pollution which guides air quality management as our population continues to grow. Both our federal and state governments also have emission reduction strategies in place.

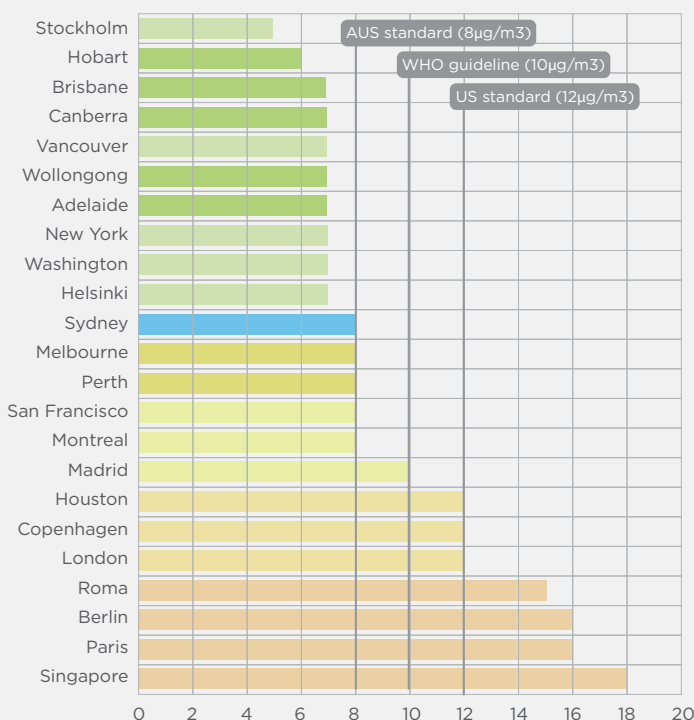
¹ This excludes exceptional air quality events such as bushfires

Sydney's air quality

Measuring, monitoring and regulations

The National Environment Protection (Ambient Air Quality) Measure (Air NEPM) was developed in consultation with health professionals, environmental groups and the community. Both state and federal governments are required to report against the six main air pollutants and our national standards for PM_{2.5} are one of the most stringent in the world.

In NSW, the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment monitors, analyses and publishes information about air quality. They operate a comprehensive air quality monitoring network to provide you with accurate and up-to-date information about air quality. The Environment Protection Authority (EPA) regulates air quality and implements measures for managing and reporting air pollution. They assist NSW in maintaining a balance between managing competing demands on the environment and supporting sustainable growth.



*Air quality in Sydney and internationally.
Source: World Health Organisation*

Reducing vehicle emissions

Did you know that although there are more cars on the road, EPA data shows total emissions from motor vehicles in Sydney have fallen significantly over the past 20 years? This is a result of the improvements in fuel quality and better engine designs.

While the number of cars is expected to further increase as our population of Sydney continues to grow, total emissions from motor vehicles are set to continue to fall over the next decade.

Government initiatives and technological developments have also been implemented in recent years to assist in further reducing vehicle emissions. They include:

- National Clean Air Agreement
- clean fleet program
- smoky vehicle camera systems
- vehicle import duties on second-hand cars
- improvements in technologies and design e.g. electric vehicles.

The NSW Government will continue to work with the Commonwealth and support initiatives to further reduce motor vehicle emissions at the source.

Cars built after 2013 emit

97% less

oxides of nitrogen than vehicles built in 1976



Diesel trucks built after 2013 emit

92% less

particles of matter than trucks built in 1996

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Main pollution contributors

Sydney is a major international centre with residential, commercial, industrial, and natural occurrences such as bush fires, all contributing to air pollution. Motor vehicles are an important contributor to emissions, contributing 13 per cent of PM_{2.5}, and 55 per cent of nitrogen oxides (which includes nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) and nitric oxide (NO)). Other major contributors include wood heaters, which contributes 50 per cent of PM_{2.5}, and industry – which contributes 18 per cent of PM_{2.5} and 13 per cent of oxides of nitrogen.

Further reading

Sydney's Air Quality Info

www.dpie.nsw.gov.au/air-quality/air-quality-concentration-data-updated-hourly

About Air Quality

www.epa.nsw.gov.au/your-environment/air

ACTAQ

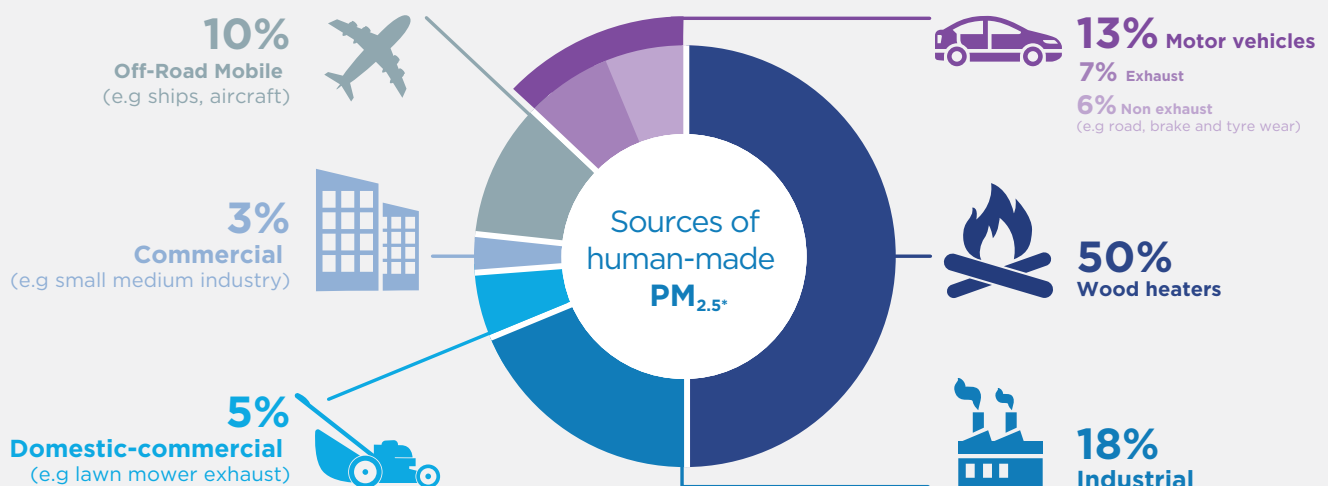
www.chiefscientist.nsw.gov.au/reports/advisory-committee-on-tunnel-air-quality

Current Air Quality

www.dpie.nsw.gov.au/air-quality

Vehicle Emission Standards

infrastructure.gov.au/roads/environment/emission/



Source contributions to PM_{2.5} emissions in Sydney. Source: NSW Environment Protection Authority

For more information



nswroads.work/airquality



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