



October 29, 2025 – News Release  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media contact: Lisa Woodard  
Communications & Outreach Manager  
[LWoodard@spokanecleanair.org](mailto:LWoodard@spokanecleanair.org)  
(509) 863-2463

### **Spokane Marks a Clean Air Milestone: Carbon Monoxide and Particulate Matter Pollution Success**

**SPOKANE, Wash.** – Clean, healthy air is one of our most valuable resources, and after decades-long efforts, it's also one of the Spokane region's biggest success stories.

The Spokane Regional Clean Air Agency (SRCAA) announced the end of a 20-year, federally mandated, maintenance period demonstrating continued compliance with clean air standards for carbon monoxide (CO) and particulate matter (PM10).

"Spokane County's air quality meets clean air standards nearly every day of the year, with a handful of exceptions that mainly occur during wildfire season, said SRCAA Executive Director April Westby. "This is a remarkable turnaround from the 1970s, '80s, and '90s, when the area routinely failed health-based clean air standards established by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency."

Carbon monoxide (CO) is an odorless, colorless, poisonous gas that comes from incomplete combustion. Automobile emissions are the largest contributor to CO. Particulate matter measuring 10 microns in diameter or less, referred to as PM10, is primarily composed of dust and smoke particles.

A combination of factors brought the Spokane area into compliance with the clean air standards, including automobile technologies such as catalytic converters, electronic fuel injection, and oxygen sensors. Other reductions were achieved through the use of oxygenated fuel during winter, the switch to cleaner wood heating devices, improved street cleaning practices, and the use of cleaner traction sand in combination with chemical liquid deicers.

The end of the 20-year maintenance period doesn't affect SRCAA's programs to improve and maintain clean air. One change, however, is that Transportation Conformity, conducted by the Spokane Regional Transportation Council (SRTC), is no longer required.

"Achieving our air quality goals after 20 years attests to the steadfast hard work and collaboration between SRTC staff and community advocates across Spokane County," said SRTC Executive Director Lois Bollenback. "I am proud of this region's great accomplishment. Our diligent monitoring and mindfulness of air quality will allow us to maintain a healthy environment for years to come."

-more-

While the area can declare success on a couple of fronts, there is concern about fine particle pollution or PM2.5, a subset of PM10. The EPA established the standard for PM2.5 in 1997, based on evidence that these smaller, combustion-based particles are considered more harmful to human health.

Wildfire smoke has resulted in unhealthy levels of PM2.5. Since 2012, the Spokane area has experienced an annual average of 5.5 days of unhealthy PM2.5 levels due to wildfire smoke. Aside from wildfires, there are local sources of PM2.5, including wood heating, outdoor burning, and diesel vehicle exhaust.

“There’s still plenty of work to achieve cleaner air year-round,” Westby said. “About 80% of our air pollution comes from our everyday choices—how we drive, heat our homes, and use energy. So small changes across our community can add up to cleaner, healthier air.”

To learn how you can help keep Spokane’s air clean, visit [SpokaneCleanAir.org/clean-air-choices](https://SpokaneCleanAir.org/clean-air-choices).

[This fact sheet](#) provides more information about the PM10 and CO attainment and maintenance efforts.

-end-