

## What air pollutants do we monitor?

The federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) sets air quality standards to protect health. EPA has set standards for seven air pollutants: carbon monoxide (CO), nitrogen oxides (NO<sub>2</sub>), sulfur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>), lead (Pb), fine particulate matter (PM<sub>2.5</sub>), larger particulate matter (PM<sub>10</sub>), and ozone (O<sub>3</sub>). The standards define how much air pollution is safe in the outdoor air. For more information about EPA's air quality standards, click [here](#).

## Why do we monitor air quality?

States monitor air quality in different areas to find out how much pollution is in the air and make sure pollutant levels are meeting health-based federal air quality standards. Knowing how much pollution is in the air in a certain area helps air quality agencies know when and how to take action to protect public health.

Ecology uses its air monitoring data to:

- Determine if air quality is meeting federal standards
- Determine the highest pollutant concentrations
- Forecast air quality
- Evaluate the effectiveness of air pollution control programs
- Evaluate the effects of air pollution on public health
- Track the progress of plans for meeting air quality standards
- Determine air quality trends
- Develop responsible and cost-effective pollution control strategies