



Transportation Is Driving Smog's Health Impacts In Connecticut

Health Harming Smog Along Transportation Corridors Reaches Dangerous Levels

Smog pollution, otherwise known as ozone, is a major public health issue in Connecticut.

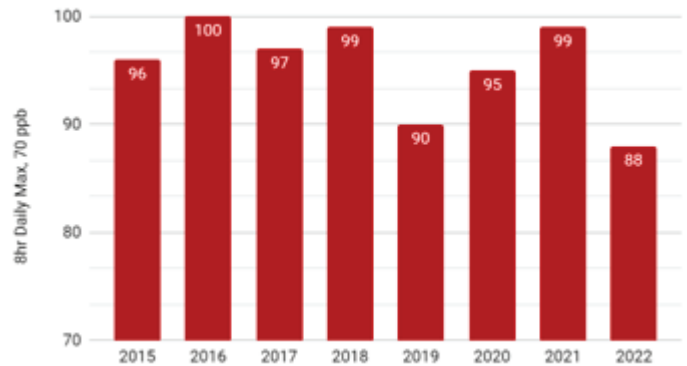
- All of Connecticut's 3.6 million residents live in areas with unsafe levels of smog currently exceeding the federal air quality standard of 70 parts per billion by over 40% in recent years.
- Pollution from vehicle tailpipes and industry (NOx and VOCs) mix with sunlight to form smog, making the summer months the worst for air quality in cities.
- Smog causes chronic respiratory illnesses resulting in asthma attacks, bronchitis, and premature death.
- Smog pollution disproportionately impacts communities of color. The Connecticut Health Foundation's data shows that emergency department visits for asthma among Black children are five times the rate for white children. Black Connecticut residents are nearly three times as likely, and Hispanic residents are twice as likely, to die from asthma as white residents.

Connecticut Consistently Exceeds Minimum Federal Air Quality Standards

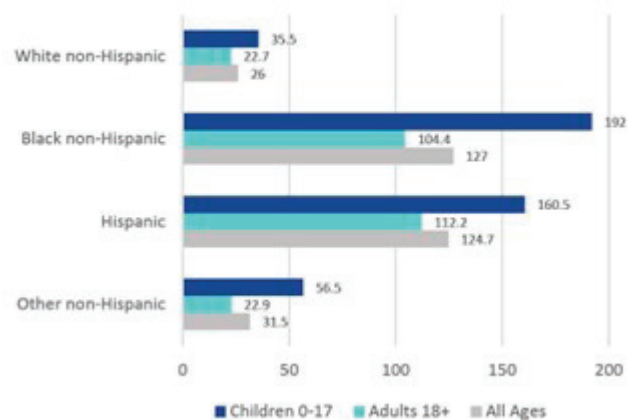
Connecticut can do something about its smog problem by reducing pollution from its cars and trucks.

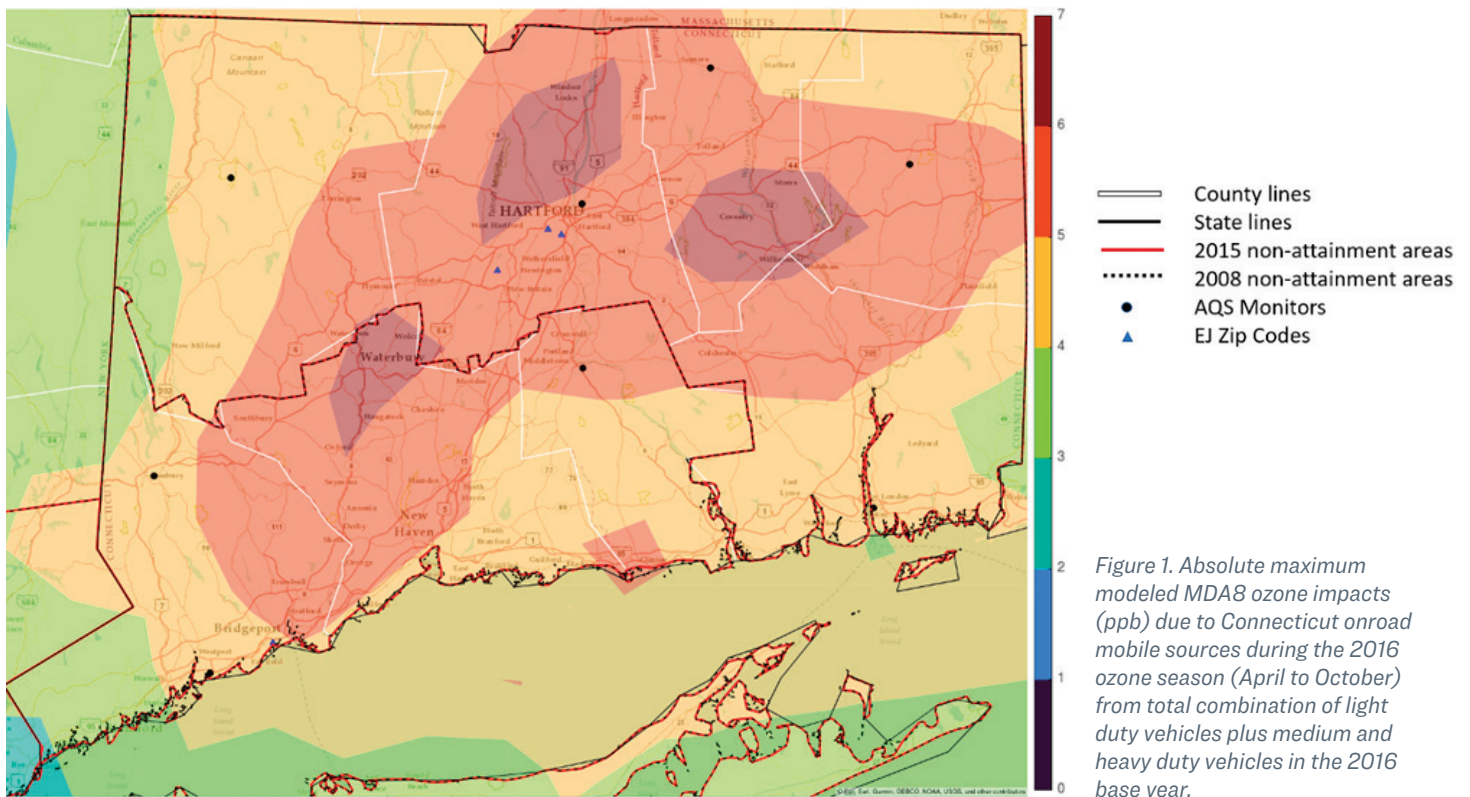
Recent ozone modeling by Sonoma Technology confirms the massive contribution of on-road vehicles to ozone pollution in Connecticut is high.

State of Connecticut, 8hr Daily Ozone Max



Asthma emergency department visits, Connecticut, 2018⁴
Rates are age-adjusted and per 10,000 people





Ozone pollution in Connecticut is traceable in significant part to emissions of nitrogen oxides (NO_x), which are released by the combustion of gasoline and diesel fuel in vehicles. Over one third of Connecticut’s total NO_x emissions—approximately 36.9 percent—are attributable to pollution from vehicles on Connecticut’s roads.

On high smog days, such as in the summer, pollution from in-state cars and trucks contribute 5.48 ppb of ozone to Connecticut’s nonattainment areas. That is nearly eight times what EPA considers a legally “significant contribution” sufficient to bring an entire upwind state under emissions reduction requirements in other contexts. Even though there are far fewer large trucks and buses than smaller passenger vehicles in Connecticut, larger vehicles contribute a greater share of ozone. As the map shows, throughout all of Connecticut smog from traffic is significantly higher than deemed safe by the EPA. Higher smog impacts are present in and around densely populated areas including Waterbury, Bridgeport, New Haven, and Hartford, though in some instances air currents can move the highest impacts somewhat off center from urban cores.

What Can Connecticut Do?

Connecticut has the opportunity to adopt vehicle pollution standards—including the Advanced Clean Cars II (ACC II) rule and Advanced Clean Trucks (ACT) rule.

Sierra Club and its partners are urging adoption and implementation of these rules this year. Advocates are also encouraging the swift adoption of the Heavy-Duty NO_x Omnibus (HDO) rule to reduce pollution from trucks. Adoption of these rules is a critical step toward meeting Governor Lamont’s commitment to reducing pollution in Connecticut’s overburdened environmental justice communities and achieving Connecticut’s legislatively mandated climate commitments, which require statewide GHG emission reductions of 45% below 2001 levels by 2030 and 80% below 2001 levels by 2050.

Adopting clean vehicle regulations is critical to addressing Connecticut’s long-standing air quality attainment challenges.

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