

# EPA Community Air Monitoring

Air Monitoring on Gulf Coast | EPA Response to BP Spill in the Gulf of Mexico | US EPA Page 1 of 3



## EPA Response to BP Spill in the Gulf of Mexico Monitoring Air Quality Along the Gulf Coast

In response to the BP oil spill, EPA monitored air, water, sediment, and the cleanup operations. Ongoing response and restoration efforts are a [Restoration Update](#).

While emergency response data collection has ended, results continue. This site also provides data collected by the public for this site, and data available from the Environmental Registry.

Much of the content of this site continues to be available for historical purposes, but we are no longer updating these pages on a regular basis.

EPA has been monitoring the air at multiple sites on shore along the Gulf Coast to see if spill-related pollutants are present in the air at levels that might cause health problems in the Gulf region. EPA has been monitoring for pollutants that:

- can evaporate from fresh crude oil
- can evaporate from weathered oil
- can come ashore from burning oil out at sea

EPA has also monitored onshore air to determine whether chemicals in the dispersants used offshore are reaching onshore air.

Learn about what EPA has done.

- On this page:
- What air pollutants have been monitored?
  - What are the sources of air pollutants that EPA is monitoring?
  - What are the health effects of air pollutants?
  - What are the air quality standards?
  - What are the EPA's monitoring sites along the Gulf Coast?
  - What are the EPA's monitoring sites in the Gulf of Mexico?

### What air pollutants have been monitored?

1. Air pollutants from the oil that may BP into onshore air have volatile organic compounds (VOCs) and associated with oil, and other petroleum products. Some VOCs have a "fun diesel fuel" odor. VOCs in the air may lead to irritation in ground-level ozone. Learn about VOCs.

2. Air pollutants from burning oil that may BP into onshore air include polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) and a group of semi-volatile organic compounds (SVOCs) that are present in crude oil and produced by the heat, and remain in "weathered" after VOCs have evaporated. Some PAHs are toxic when inhaled or absorbed through the skin. Learn about PAHs.

3. Air pollutants from burning oil that may BP into onshore air include particulate matter (PM), which is made up of tiny particles of solid and liquid matter. PM is made up of many different types of particles, including dust, dirt, soot, and smoke. PM is a major air pollutant. Learn about PM.

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<http://www.epa.gov/bpspill/air-mon.html>

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