



State of Oregon
Department of
Environmental
Quality



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State air quality regulators seek comments on draft Cleaner Air Oregon rules

PORTLAND — State air quality regulators and health experts are seeking public comment on proposed new rules to regulate industrial air toxics and reduce the impact these pollutants have on the health of Oregonians.

The proposed Cleaner Air Oregon rules would set health risk limits on pollutants that industrial facilities emit so that neighbors and vulnerable people (such as children) are protected from potentially harmful levels of exposure.

The Cleaner Air Oregon rule-making process was launched by Governor Kate Brown in April 2016, after communities around the state raised concerns about their exposure to potentially harmful heavy metals, chemicals and other pollutants from factories and other industrial sources.

The proposed Cleaner Air Oregon rules would close gaps in the state's existing air quality rules that can create health risks for families and communities. Oregon's current rules are based on federal law. These rules can allow industrial facilities to

release potentially harmful amounts of air toxics, but still operate within legal requirements. Washington, California and 22 other states have closed these gaps by adopting health risk limits on industrial pollutants. The proposed Cleaner Air Oregon rules build on the lessons learned from other states.

Some of the ways Cleaner Air Oregon would close the gaps in current air toxics rules include:

- **Report air toxics:** Cleaner Air Oregon requires companies to report use of 600 heavy metals, chemicals and other pollutants to state regulators. *(Current rules do not require companies to report air toxics emissions to regulators.)*
- **Risk assessments:** The proposed rules would set risk limits for 260 industrial air toxics. New and existing industrial facilities would be required to calculate the risks their emissions pose to people who live nearby and report their results to state regulators. Risk calculations would consider health problems (e.g., cancer, birth defects, nerve damage, nausea, breathing problems, rashes) from short- and long-term exposures. *(Under current rules, health risks to neighbors are not considered in setting use limits for air toxics.)*
- **Reduce risk:** The new rules tie air quality permits and enforcement to the levels of potentially harmful air toxics a facility puts into the air and the impact they could have on the health of neighbors. Companies would be required to act if the levels of air toxics they emit exceed health safety limits. *(Current rules do not let regulators use health risks to neighbors to decide whether to grant permits to factories and other sources of air toxics.)*

The Cleaner Air Oregon rules have been drafted to provide businesses with predictable and flexible air quality rules so Oregon industries can remain competitive in a global economy. The rules would focus on the highest risk sources first. They would have limited impact on low-risk businesses and small businesses. They would allow flexibility for companies faced with financial hardships and provide more time to meet the rules' standards.

The rules were developed by the state based on input from national experts and a 23-member advisory committee of Oregonians, which included scientists, physicians, community representatives, large and small business owners, local

health officials, labor representatives, environmental justice advocates and others.

Members of the public have until Dec. 22 to submit comments. Oregonians can submit their input online at the [Cleaner Air Oregon website \(http://cleanerair.oregon.gov\)](http://cleanerair.oregon.gov), or at upcoming public hearings

There will also be six public hearings about the draft rules where you can learn more and provide comments. The places, dates and times for the public hearings are:

- **Medford:** Wednesday, Nov. 15, 5:30-7:30 p.m., at the Department of Environmental Quality, 221 Stewart Avenue, Suite 201
- **Coos Bay:** Thursday, Nov. 16, 5:30-7:30 p.m., at the Coos Bay Library, 525 Anderson Avenue
- **Corvallis:** Monday, Nov. 20, 5:30-8 p.m., Walnut Community Room, 4950 NW Fair Oaks Dr.
- **Pendleton:** Tuesday, Nov. 28, 5:30-7:30 p.m., Pendleton Library, 502 SW Dorion Ave.
- **Portland:** Wednesday, Nov. 29, 5:30-9:30 p.m., Portland Community College SE Campus, Community Hall, 2305 SE 82nd Ave.
- **Portland:** Saturday, Dec. 2, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., Oregon Convention Center, 777 NE Martin Luther King Jr Blvd.

Additional information:

[Cleaner Air Oregon website: http://cleanerair.oregon.gov/](http://cleanerair.oregon.gov/)

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