

State of North Carolina

JOSH STEIN
GOVERNOR

AIR QUALITY AWARENESS WEEK

2026

BY THE GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA

A PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, North Carolinians are breathing the cleanest air in decades; and the state has been designated “in attainment” with every National Ambient Air Quality Standard for more than 10 years due to the collective efforts of state leaders, regulatory agencies, electric utilities, industry, and the public in addressing air quality concerns and reducing pollution; and

WHEREAS, combined emissions in North Carolina of hazardous air pollutants and toxic air pollutants declined by more than 108 million pounds (an 82 percent decrease) from 1993 to 2022; and

WHEREAS, air pollution is a leading risk factor for premature death and cardiovascular health problems; more than 100,000 people still die annually in the United States due to air pollution, with children and older adults at higher risk of experiencing health-related problems from breathing polluted air; and reductions in air pollution emissions in North Carolina have thus cumulatively saved thousands of lives; and

WHEREAS, outdoor visibility, which is important to the environment and the tourism economy in North Carolina, has improved since 2000, with visibility on the haziest days improving by 39 to 51 miles; and

WHEREAS, the North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) actively monitors tropospheric ozone, particulate matter, and other measures of air quality and works with businesses, local governments, and residents to ensure the air is clean; and

WHEREAS, 2025 was the second year on record during which the state did not measure any exceedances of the daily ozone air quality standard since the state began its ambient air quality monitoring program; and

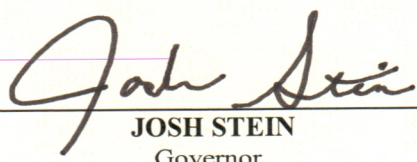
WHEREAS, DEQ’s Division of Air Quality provides daily county-level air quality forecasts in the online Air Quality Portal and through local media to help residents make informed choices about their outdoor activities; and

WHEREAS, DEQ is supporting education and outreach efforts to encourage all residents to access and understand the Air Quality Index as a tool to protect their health and take positive actions in their daily lives to help improve air quality in their communities; and

WHEREAS, the State of North Carolina is committed to continued efforts to protect our air and improve air quality for North Carolinians and to raise awareness among North Carolinians about the importance of clean air to the quality of life in our state;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, JOSH STEIN, Governor of the State of North Carolina, do hereby proclaim May 4 – 8, 2026, as “**AIR QUALITY AWARENESS WEEK**” in North Carolina and commend its observance to all residents.




JOSH STEIN
Governor

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed the Great Seal of the State of North Carolina at the Capitol in Raleigh this seventh day of April in the year of our Lord two thousand and twenty-sixth and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and fiftieth.