



**ARAQMD**

*Protecting the Air*

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Akron Regional Air Quality Management District

Annual Report for 2013

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## **Introduction**

This report is designed to give an overall picture of the Akron Regional Air Quality Management District's (ARAQMD) activities in the calendar year 2013. It describes how our agency is structured, the work performed by each section of our agency, and our agency's plans for the future.

The administrative section of this report contains the fiscal status of the agency, the staffing changes, and an organizational chart. The ambient monitoring section has monitoring data summarized to explain where the region is with respect to attainment of the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS), and some additional monitoring projects the staff has undertaken. The permitting section has a summary of the activities of the permitting staff and the facility inspections performed. Finally, the enforcement section of the report contains data about the activities of the enforcement staff.

## **Administrative Section**

### **Staff Changes:**

In April 2013, ARAQMD welcomed Public Health Intern, Samantha Mellott, to our staff to assist in the monitoring workload. Samantha was hired as an undergraduate student at Kent State University's School of Public Health. She graduated in December 2013.

In May 2013, ARAQMD lost Sanitarian, Brad Pringle, due to health issues. Brad inspected asbestos removal and demolition projects for our agency. Sadly, Brad passed away on May 1, 2013.

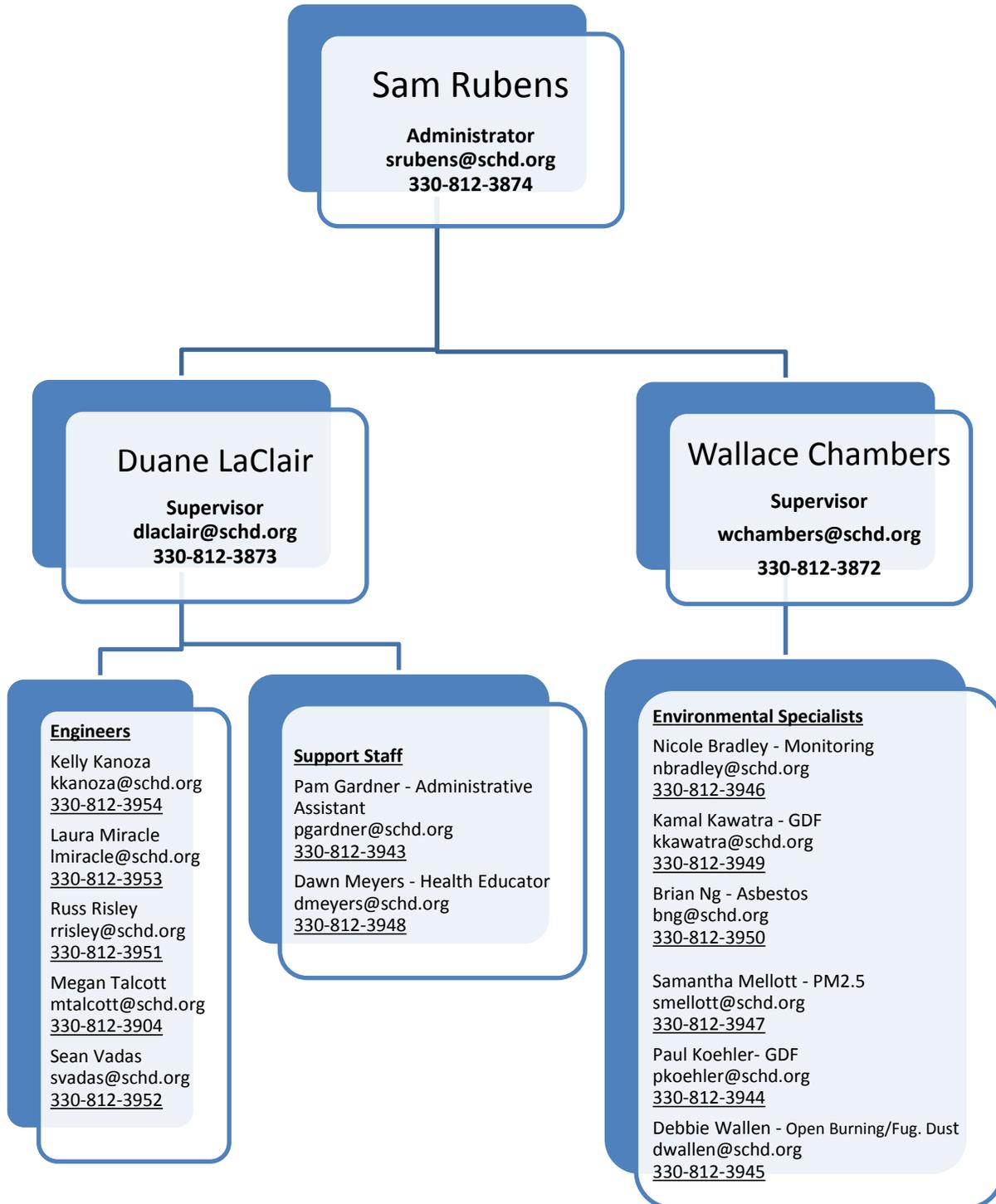
In June 2013, Sanitarian, Jim Eckert, left ARAQMD. Jim conducted inspections of gasoline dispensing facilities (GDF).

In September 2013, ARAQMD hired Sanitarian Kamalpreet Kawatra, to work in the GDF sections. Kamalpreet came to ARAQMD from the Marion County Health Department where she was a Generalist. She recently attained her RS certification.

In October 2013, ARAQMD wished one of our long time employees, Sanitarian Steve Stakleff, a happy, healthy, and well-deserved retirement. Steve has been with ARAQMD since 2000 handling GDF inspections.

In November 2013, Sanitarian Paul Koehler, joined ARAQMD to handle GDF and facility inspections. Paul has been with the Akron Health Department since 1993, working as a Health Educator and Food Inspector. We also saw Wayne Kline, Sanitarian in Training, leave for employment at NOACA.

Figure 1: Organizational Chart



## Local Fees

In 2012, ARAQMD revised the local fee structure to base the fees on the emissions allowed in the facility permit, rather than the potential emissions. As this restructuring made some drastic changes in the fees owed by some companies, any facility that saw a greater than 400% change in their fees was put on a graduated schedule. These facilities paid one third of the revised fee on the 2012 invoice, two thirds on the 2013 invoice and the entire amount starting on the 2014 invoice. The invoices are sent out in January each year and are for the prior year's emissions. The revenue generated from the local fees is shown in Table 1. Tables 2 and 3 show where ARAQMD's funding comes from and how it will be spent.

**Table 1: Local Fee Revenue**

	2011 (actual)	2012 (actual)	2013 (actual)	2014 (projected)
Facilities	371	1040	1040	1040
Revenue	\$111,986	\$209,922	\$238,771	\$270,750

**Table 2: 2013-14 ARAQMD Revenue Sources**

USEPA Funds	OEPA Funds	Local Funds	Enforcement	Total
\$367,893	\$1,045,551	\$238,771	\$9,830	\$1,662,045

**Table 3: 2013-14 ARAQMD Projected Expenses**

Salaries	\$1,142,523
Benefits	\$413,212
Other Expenditures (Office, Equipment, etc.)	\$106,310
Total	\$1,662,045

## Update on Current Initiatives

In the 2012 Annual Report, several projects were mentioned which have progressed through 2013. First, the project of changing the common name of the agency from Akron Regional Air Quality Management District to ARAQMD has seen significant movement; however a name change is always difficult to measure. The logo for ARAQMD was redesigned in 2013 and has been in use on letterhead, business cards and the website. ARAQMD is still in the planning stage of upgrading monitoring equipment, although some purchases were made, the significant portion of this project still remains to be done.

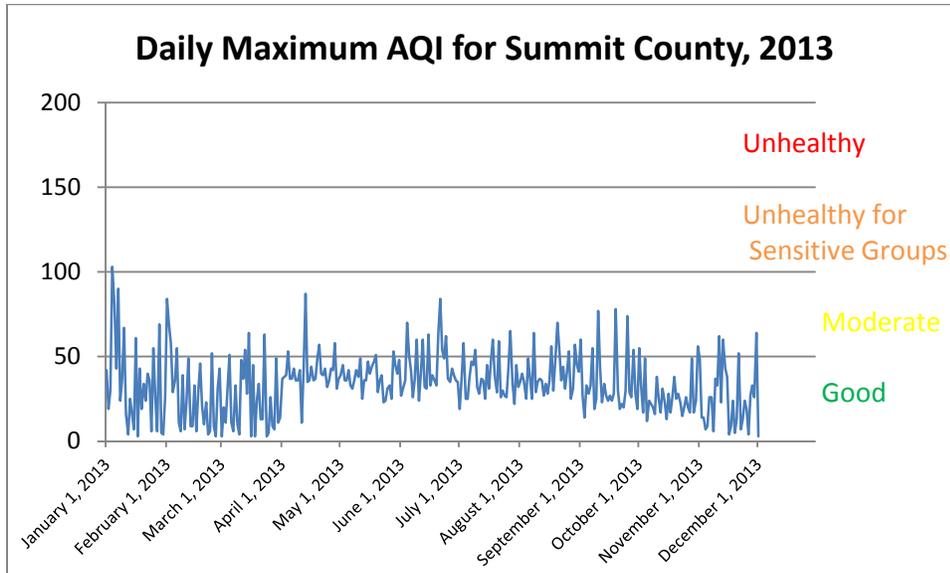
## Ambient Air Monitoring Section

### Air Quality Index

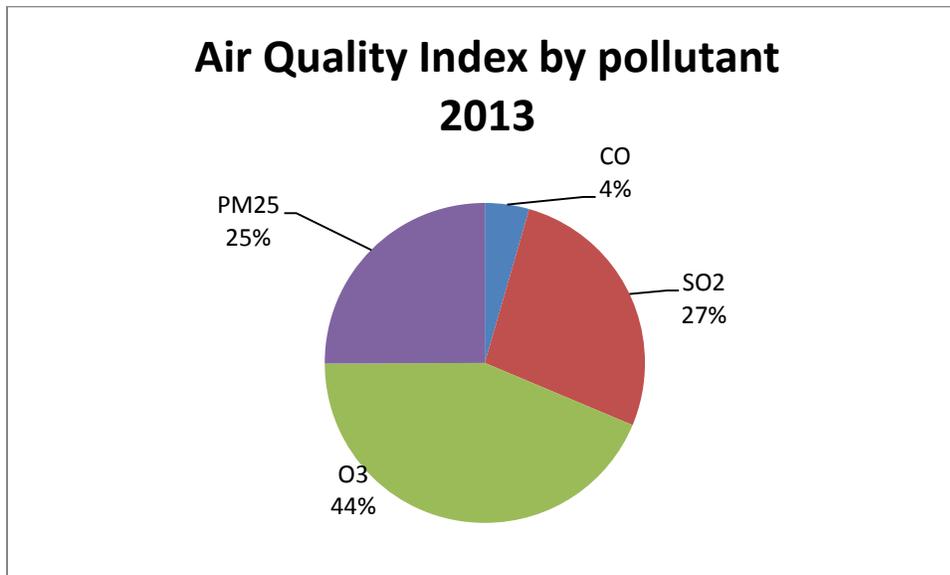
Twice every weekday, ARAQMD reports the Air Quality Index (AQI) to the public by means of the ARAQMD website at <http://araqmd.org/AQI.html>, the agency Facebook page and the Air Quality Information line at 330-375-2545. The AQI is intended to advise the public of the potential health effects of the ambient air pollution. The AQI has six categories which have AQI values assigned. The AQI

categories and the values are; Good (0-50), Moderate (51-100), Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups (101-150), Unhealthy (151-200), Very Unhealthy (201-300), and Hazardous (301-500).

**Figure 2: Daily Maximum AQI for Summit County, 2013**



**Figure 3: AQI 2013 by Category**

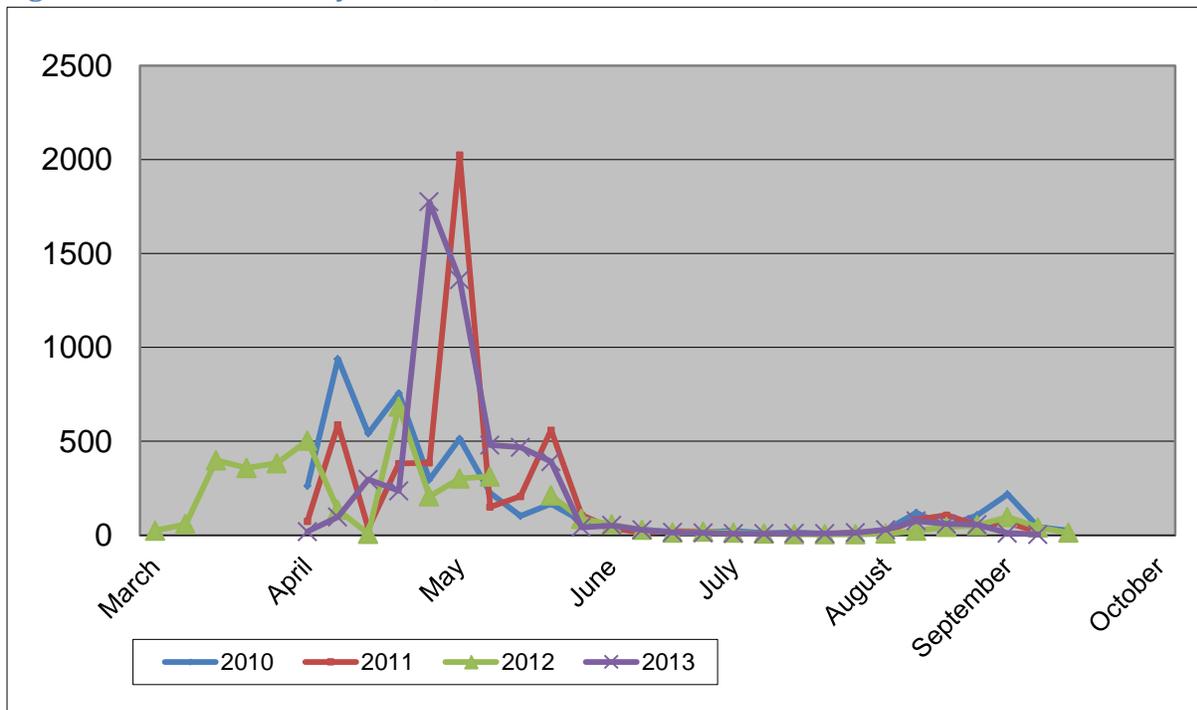


### Pollen Sampling

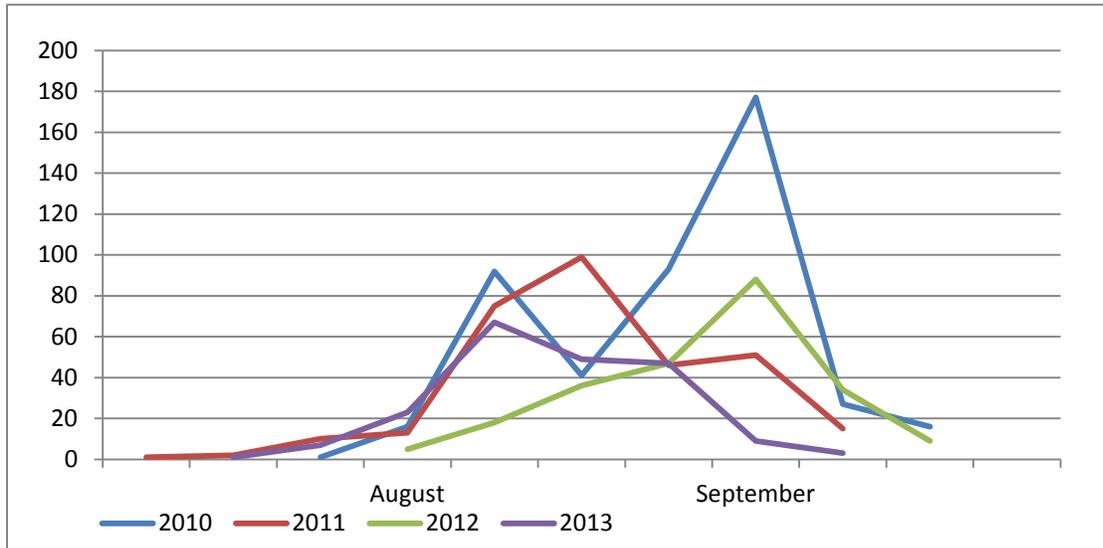
The ARAQMD staff begins collecting and analyzing pollen on April 1 of each year and the season runs through the beginning of October or until the first killing frost. Figure 4 shows the weekly averages of the pollen count for the years 2010 to 2013. The peak of the pollen season is usually in the second week of May each year; the peak appeared in April in 2010 due to early and exceptionally warm temperatures. In 2012, a warm, moist winter was experienced which allowed for an extended pollen

season. In the extended 2012 pollen season, the different trees had time to produce pollen at different times. Usually, the springtime pollen season will force all the trees to pollinate at one time, which leads to a very high pollen count for a short time. In 2012, we saw a lower maximum count, but over a longer time period. In 2013, the pollen season was more normal for this area. There are three seasons each year; tree pollen which occurs in the beginning of the season, grass season which follows the tree pollen and finally the ragweed season that comes in August and September. Definite spikes were seen for pine, oak and maple tree pollen. In Figures 4 and 5, the pollen and ragweed counts can be examined in more detail.

**Figure 4: Pollen Counts by Week, 2010-2013**



**Figure 5: Ragweed Counts, 2010-2013**



Each year since 2008, all pollen and ragweed daily counts are analyzed and the pollen count value at the 5<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, and 25<sup>th</sup> percentile are calculated and published as the breakpoints for categorization of the next year’s daily counts. These correspond to the categories of good, moderate and high. Table 4 lists the ranges for use in the 2014 pollen season.

**Table 4: Pollen and Ragweed Ranges for 2014 season**

	Tree and Grass Pollen	Ragweed Pollen
Good (50 <sup>th</sup> %ile)	0-34	0-18
Moderate (25 <sup>th</sup> %ile)	35-102	19-53
High (10 <sup>th</sup> %ile)	103-292	54-110
Very High (5 <sup>th</sup> %ile)	293+	111+

### National Ambient Air Quality Standards

The National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) were devised in the 1970 Clean Air Act and are supposed to be reviewed and, if necessary, revised every five years. The review of the NAAQS are started by a rigorous scientific study done by the Clean Air Scientific Advisory Committee (CASAC), an independent group that was created to advise the EPA in scientific matters, who then make recommendations to the EPA as to what the scientific research shows that the levels of certain pollutants should be to adequately protect human health. The mode of the NAAQS is generally given in a concentration per time period or volume of air. Units of measure for the standards are parts per million (ppm) by volume, parts per billion (ppb) by volume, and micrograms per cubic meter of air ( $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ ). The newer NAAQS are given as a 98<sup>th</sup> percentile of all data collected being under a certain level or an average of the 98<sup>th</sup> percentile values being less than a certain level. The current NAAQS can be seen in Table 5.

**Table 5: 2013 NAAQS**

Pollutant	Level	Averaging Time	Attainment Requirement
Carbon Monoxide (CO)	9 ppm	8 hour	2 <sup>nd</sup> high
	35 ppm	1 hour	2 <sup>nd</sup> high
Lead (Pb)	0.15 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$	Rolling three month average	
	1.5 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$	Quarterly	
Nitrogen Dioxide (NO <sub>x</sub> )	53 ppb	Annual Mean	
	100 ppb	1 hour	3 year average of the 98 <sup>th</sup> percentile value
Fine Particulate Matter (PM <sub>2.5</sub> )	12.0 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$	Annual Mean	
	35.4 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$	24 hour	3 year average of the 98 <sup>th</sup> percentile value
Ozone (O <sub>3</sub> )	75 ppb	8 hour	3 year average of the 98 <sup>th</sup> percentile value
Sulfur Dioxide (SO <sub>2</sub> )	30 ppb	Annual Mean	
	140 ppb	24 hour	
	75 ppb	1 hour	3 year average of the 99 <sup>th</sup> percentile value

### Particulate Matter with a Diameter of less than 2.5 microns (PM<sub>2.5</sub>)

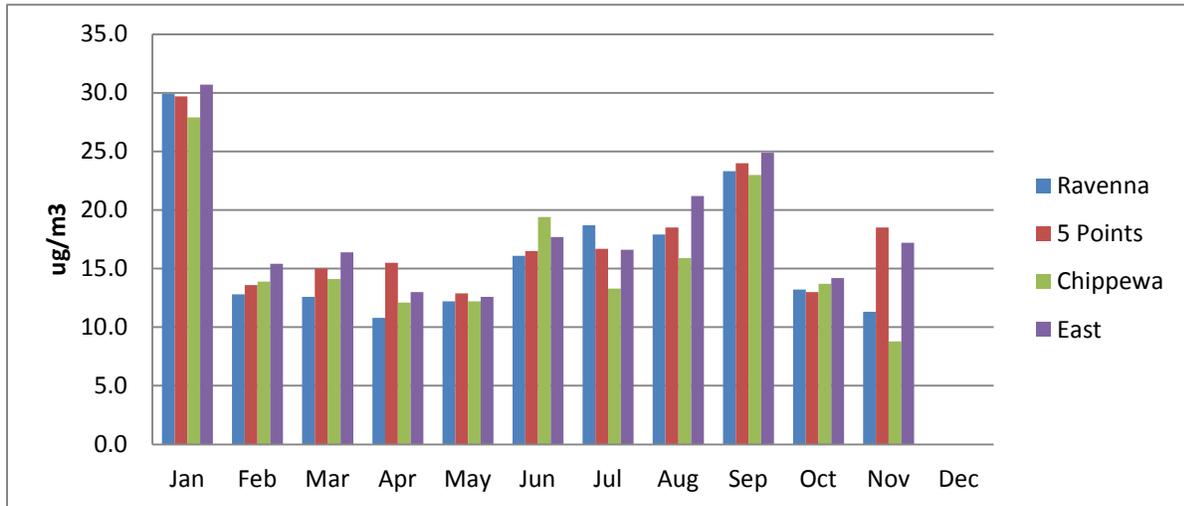
In 1987, the USEPA made a change from total suspended particulate (TSP) to coarse particulate matter. PM<sub>10</sub> is made of particulate which can reach the thoracic region or upper lung area of humans. Upon review in 1997, the USEPA changed focus from PM<sub>10</sub> (coarse particulate matter) to PM<sub>2.5</sub> (fine particulate matter) in the ambient air. The PM<sub>2.5</sub> can be inhaled into the lower lung region and is hard to exhale. Once in the moist and warm lower regions of the lungs, chemical reactions can occur and the chemicals in the particulate matter can become dissolved and be transported across the lung membrane into the blood stream.

There are two NAAQS for PM<sub>2.5</sub>. The first is a 12.0  $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$  annual arithmetic mean, averaged over three consecutive years. The second is a 35  $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$  4<sup>th</sup> high 24 hour average. This standard is attained when the 4<sup>th</sup> highest 24 hour average, averaged over 3 consecutive years, is less than 35  $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ .

ARAQMD's monitoring network for PM<sub>2.5</sub> consists of two continuous monitors located in Medina and Summit Counties, intermittent Federal Reference Method (FRM) monitors located in Summit, Portage and Medina Counties and speciation monitors located in Summit County. The intermittent monitors are used to determine if the region is in attainment with the NAAQS. The continuous monitors are used to determine the Air Quality Index (AQI) and research projects which can help determine where particulate matter comes from, forecasting the AQI, and health effects. The speciation monitors are used for research projects, which determine the composition of the particulate matter and allow for controls to be put into place to minimize those sources.

Below is a graph showing the maximum 24 hour concentrations of fine particulate matter by month for 2013. Each of the four FRMs is shown for comparative purposes.

**Figure 6: PM<sub>2.5</sub> Maximum 24 Hour Data, by Month, 2013**



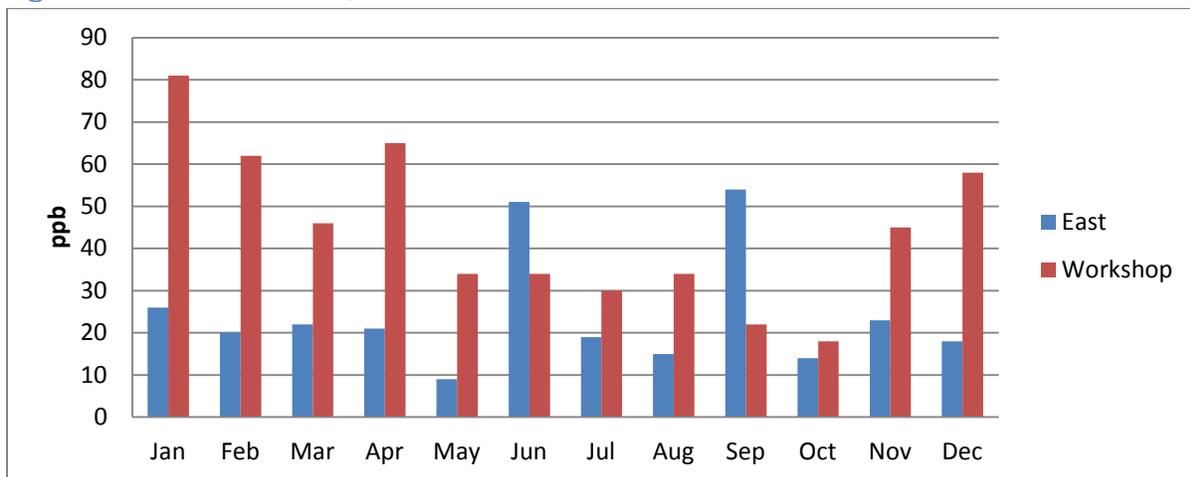
### Sulfur Dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>)

SO<sub>2</sub> is formed when sulfur-containing compounds are combusted. Most SO<sub>2</sub> in the air is caused by burning coal and smelting processes. Low-sulfur gasoline and coal are the goals for minimizing SO<sub>2</sub> production. SO<sub>2</sub> can be converted to sulfuric acid when it reacts with moisture in the air, on plants or in the lungs. Sulfuric acid is one of the most corrosive acids found in nature. If SO<sub>2</sub> is converted to sulfate (SO<sub>4</sub>), it can be a lung irritant as well.

The monitoring network for SO<sub>2</sub> is comprised of two monitors located in Akron. The Workshop site is a downtown canyon site and the East High site was started to monitor emissions from a major tire company. The data for 2013 for comparison to the NAAQS can be seen in Figure 7.

ARAQMD is in attainment for sulfur dioxide. The ARAQMD region has seen a 76% decrease in the annual mean of SO<sub>2</sub> since 1977.

**Figure 7: SO<sub>2</sub> 1 Hour Data, 2013**



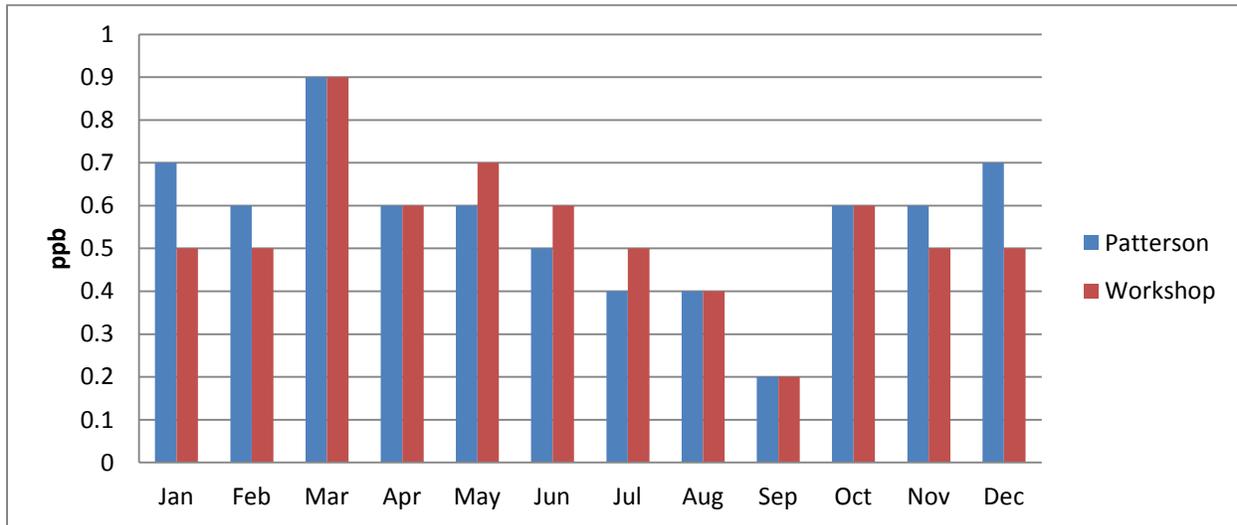
## Carbon Monoxide (CO)

CO is a colorless and odorless gas, and is an asphyxiant. It is formed by the incomplete combustion of carbon containing fossil fuels. 95% of the CO in the urban airspace comes from anthropogenic sources. CO binds to the hemoglobin in blood which minimizes the amount of oxygen the blood can carry throughout the body.

ARAQMD's monitoring network for CO includes two monitors in Akron. The Workshop site is located in downtown Akron to monitor the vehicle traffic's contribution to the pollution in the Akron area and the other, Patterson Park, is a background neighborhood site and is located in North Akron. The 2013 data can be seen in Figure 8.

ARAQMD is in attainment for carbon monoxide. The ARAQMD region has seen an 86% decrease in the 1 hour maximum concentrations of CO since 1977.

Figure 8: CO 8 Hour, 2013



## Ozone (O<sub>3</sub>)

O<sub>3</sub> is the only criteria pollutant that is not directly emitted into the atmosphere. It is created by chemical reactions in the ambient air. When volatile organic compounds and oxides of nitrogen are in the presence of ultraviolet light, ozone is formed. The health effects of ozone have been demonstrated in various ways. Reduction in lung function in normal, healthy people during periods of moderate exercise have been shown, and irritation of the eyes, mucous membranes and respiratory system are also possible.

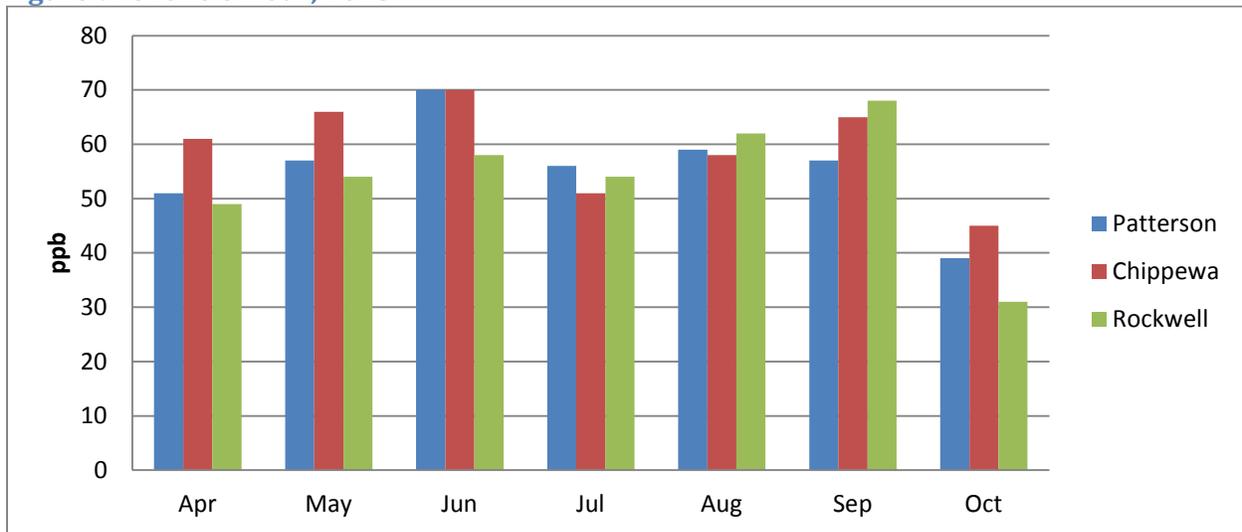
The NAAQS for ozone has changed radically in the past few years. Until 1997, the NAAQS was a fourth highest one hour maximum of 125 ppb each year. In 1997, the one hour standard was left in place and a new method of evaluating the pollution was put into place. The eight hour fourth highest average over three consecutive years must be less than 84 ppb to be in attainment. In 2006, the one hour standard was revoked. In 2009, a new standard was enacted and was upheld by the courts in 2012. The newest

NAAQS is a three year average of the fourth highest eight hour standard. This must be below 75 ppb for a three year period.

ARAQMD has three ozone sites, one each in Medina (Chippewa), Summit (Patterson) and Portage County (Rockwell). The data for comparison to the NAAQS can be seen in Figure 9.

ARAQMD is in attainment for the 2006 ozone standard, but will not be in attainment for the 2009 proposed range. The ARAQMD area has seen a 44% decrease in the 1 hour maximum concentration of ozone since 1977.

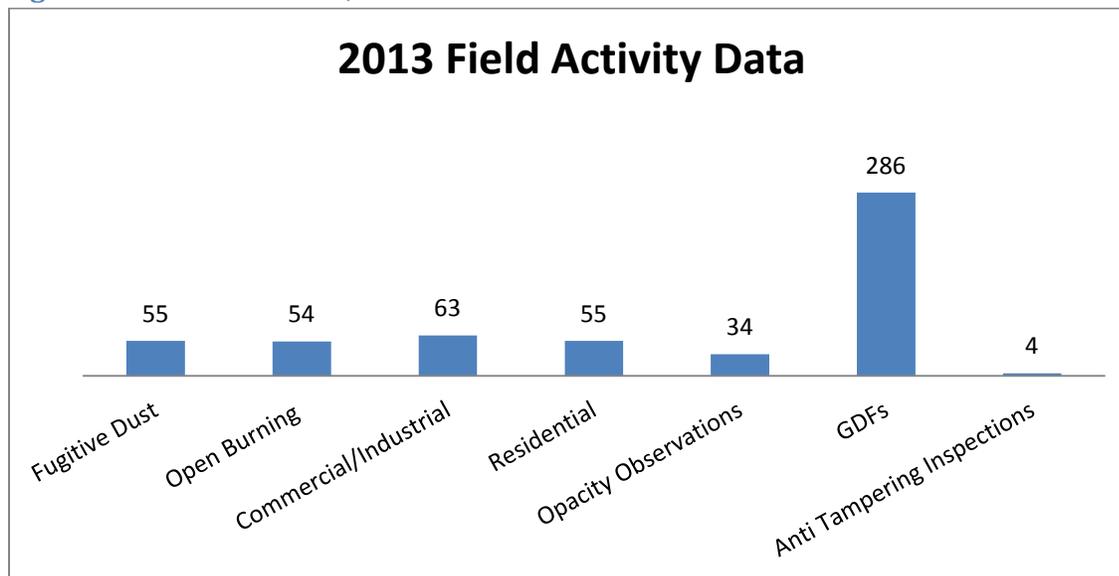
**Figure 9: Ozone 8 Hour, 2013**



## Field Activities

Field Activities are those which ARAQMD's sanitarians and engineers go out and inspect operations, either for compliance or as a result of complaints. There are staff members who do asbestos tracking and inspection, open burning or fugitive dust compliance and gas dispensing facility (GDF) inspections. Additionally, the engineering staff will handle complaints about regulated facilities which we receive from the public occasionally.

**Figure 10: Field Activities, 2013**



### **Open Burning**

ARAQMD staff members are responsible for inspecting incidents where open burning (OB) occurs. Open burning is defined by Ohio Administrative Code (OAC) Chapter 3745-19-01 as “the burning of any materials wherein air contaminants resulting from combustion are emitted directly into the air without passing through a stack or chimney.” There are regulations on the location where burning may occur, what may be burned and when the burning can happen and who may conduct the burning. Notification must be made to ARAQMD to obtain a permit at least 10 working days prior to the intended burning. As can be seen in Figure 10, 26 open burning permits were issued. ARAQMD inspectors investigated 54 complaints in 2013.

### **Fugitive Dust**

Fugitive dust (FD) is regulated under OAC Chapter 3745-17-08. Fugitive dust can be generated from many sources such as spray painting booths, furnaces, traffic on roadways/parking lots, farmland tilling or digging, and construction activities. The regulations for fugitive dust require that there must be reasonably available control measures to minimize dust release when transporting, storing, or handling dust. Some control technologies are the use of water, asphalt or oil to suppress the dust, installation of hoods or fans to enclose, contain, capture, vent and control the fugitive dust. The ARAQMD staff members will inspect fugitive dust problems on a complaint-driven basis. In 2013, inspectors investigated 55 complaints about fugitive dust.

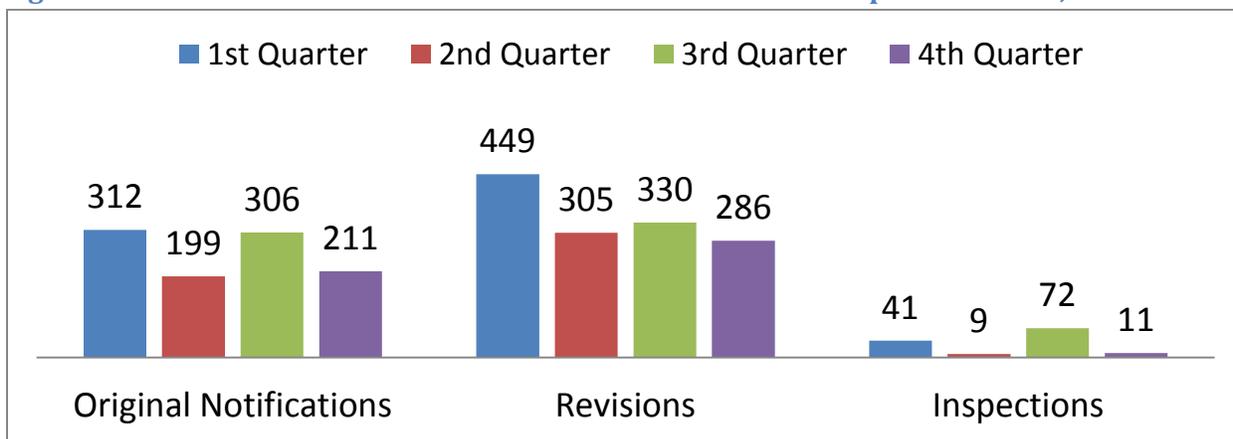
### **Asbestos**

Asbestos is a naturally occurring mineral which was used as an insulating compound on pipes and houses until the 1950s. When properly encapsulated, asbestos is very useful. When asbestos is disturbed or is at the surface of the material it is in, the asbestos fibers can fracture and become airborne. This process is termed “friable.” Studies have shown that when friable asbestos is inhaled, it can have a lengthy residence time in the lungs and cancer risk is increased significantly.

The ARAQMD staff is responsible for receiving original and revised notifications for asbestos demolition activities, processing the paperwork, and inspecting the work being done to ensure that the remediation is done correctly to minimize asbestos exposure to workers and accidental release to the ambient air. In 2013, ARAQMD inspectors achieved the 15% inspection rate on initial asbestos National Emissions Standards for Hazardous Air Pollution (NESHAP) notifications received as required in our contract with OEPA.

In 2012, the Moving Ohio Forward program was put in place to grant money from the Attorney General’s office to counties and/or land banks for the demolition of blighted, abandoned or vacant structures. As such, ARAQMD saw a huge increase in asbestos notifications and revisions in the last quarter of 2012, which continued into 2013. The quarterly notification, revision and inspection count is shown in Figure 11.

**Figure 11: Asbestos Notifications and Revisions Received and Inspections Done, 2013**



### Indoor Air Quality

ARAQMD’s Indoor Air Quality (IAQ) Program has been in place since 1993, and has assisted in almost 4000 indoor air quality complaints in residential, commercial and school settings. In 2013, the program handled 173 inquiries. Some of the most common topics are mold, carbon monoxide and soot buildup from candle burning. The indoor air staff members are educated to provide the latest information about air quality issues and health effects and how best to help the public protect their health. The IAQ program is designed to be a neutral, third-party source of information. As such, the program does not perform remediation or maintain a list of companies who do. The ARAQMD IAQ Program is available for those who work or reside in Summit, Medina or Portage Counties.

### Gas Dispensing Facilities

Gasoline is a volatile organic compound (VOC), and very integrated into our culture. Due to the widespread availability of gasoline, gas dispensing facilities (GDF’s) are subject to regulation by the Ohio EPA. Since the ARAQMD region is in non-attainment for ozone, all GDF’s in the region must utilize a Stage II Vapor Recovery System. A Stage II Vapor Recovery System includes a special nozzle, boot and collection system for the vapors that are displaced when a tank is filled. This tank can either be the

underground storage tank at the GDF or other vapor management control systems. The US EPA has directed that by the end of 2016 all Stage II Vapor Recovery Systems must be decommissioned, because newer vehicles have onboard refueling vapor recovery (ORVR) control systems that are negatively affected by the stage II systems. As such, in late 2013, ARAQMD started processing GDFs that were undergoing the decommissioning process and removing them from the inspection list.

All Stage II GDF's in the region are required to perform leak tests on the vapor recovery system annually, and every five years a more rigorous test must be done. These tests are witnessed by a member of the ARAQMD GDF enforcement team. The GDF operators are also required to keep records of maintenance, repair or modifications done to the system, and the quantity of gasoline delivered each month to the facility.

The goal of ARAQMD's inspectors is to witness the annual leak test at every one of the almost 300 GDF's in the region each year. The GDF team is responsible for scheduling the tests, maintaining the records for the tests, and submitting the reports to the Ohio EPA.

## Permitting Section

As a contractual agent of the Ohio EPA, ARAQMD is responsible for administering the Division of Air Pollution Control (DAPC) permitting program requirements for sources of air contaminants in Medina, Summit, and Portage counties. This process typically begins by conducting timely administrative and technical reviews of all permit applications received in accordance with established Ohio EPA rules, policies, and guidelines. The application review also includes federal rule applicability determinations based on criteria cited in the New Source Performance Standards (NSPS), National Emission Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants (NESHAP), Maximum Achievable Control Technology (MACT), Prevention of Significant Deterioration (PSD), Nonattainment New Source Review (NSR), etc. There are a variety of permit options available depending on the type of source, existing air quality where the source is located, operational flexibility needed by the source, and whether additional voluntary restrictions are included in the permit. In addition, there are several types of permit exemptions that range from not being subject to regulation (*de minimis* operations emitting less than 10 pounds per day) to permit-by-rule (PBR) exemptions (restrictions and obligations that must be complied with, but no permit document is generated).

### Types of Sources:

Title V/Major Sources are defined as facilities with potential emissions of 100 tons per year or more of any one regulated pollutant (PM<sub>10</sub>, NO<sub>x</sub>, SO<sub>2</sub>, CO, VOC, and lead); 10 tons per year or more of any one hazardous air pollutant (HAP); or 25 tons per year or more of any two or more HAPs. These facilities usually have very complex permitting requirements (e.g., medium to large sized industrial operations, utilities, refineries, etc.).

Synthetic Minor Title V (SMTV) Sources are defined as facilities with potential emissions above at least one major source permitting requirement and/or Title V threshold, which have agreed

to voluntarily restrict operations and the quantity of air contaminants emitted in order to avoid major source/Title V status.

Non-Title V (NTV)/Minor Sources are smaller emitting facilities, naturally below major source/Title V thresholds, with generally less complicated permitting requirements (e.g., small industrial operations, dry cleaners, gas stations, etc.).

### **Types of Permits:**

Permit-to-Install (PTI) – A permit issued for any new or modified source that is located at a Title V facility. It is effective for the life of the source, or until the next modification.

Title V Permit-to-Operate (Title V PTO) - A comprehensive, facility-wide permit that identifies all regulated operations at a Title V facility. It has a five-year effective period.

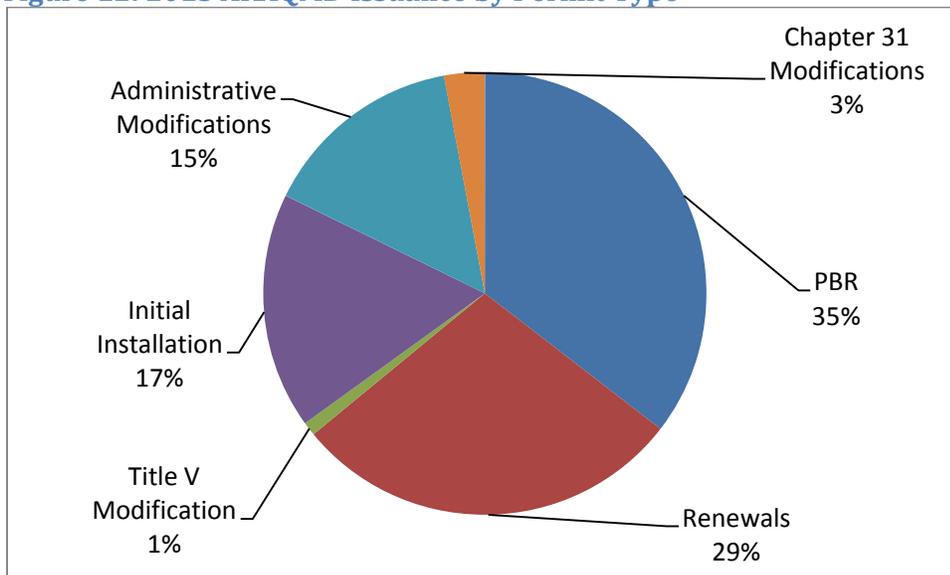
Permit-to-Install and Operate (PTIO) - This permit document is issued to NTV and SMTV facilities. It is a relatively recent permit document type. Effective June 30, 2008, Ohio EPA began issuing a single PTIO (rather than a PTI, followed by a separate PTO) in order to streamline the permitting process for air contaminant sources at non-major facilities. The PTIO has a ten-year effective period.

Federally Enforceable Permit-to-Install and Operate (FEPTIO) - This is a specific type of PTIO issued with federally enforceable limitations that restrict the facility-wide potential to emit in order to avoid various regulations. It has a five-year effective period.

Permit by Rule (PBR) - A permit-by-rule (PBR) is a specific permit provision in the Ohio Administrative Code (OAC) that applies to certain types of low-emitting air pollution sources. A facility submits a PBR notification form for a specific source and operates the source in accordance with the terms and conditions specified in the applicable rule. A PBR is effective for the life of the source, unless modified or a change of ownership occurs.

Once the preliminary and technical review of the application is complete, ARAQMD's engineering staff develops the facility-wide and emission unit specific permit terms and conditions. The permit terms specify limits on the quantity of air contaminants emitted and requirements for the operation of regulated air contaminant sources. Permit terms can also specify emission testing, monitoring, record-keeping, and reporting requirements necessary to demonstrate compliance with the established emission limits. The working copy of the permit is then submitted to the Ohio EPA for final review and issuance. During 2013, ARAQMD's staff processed 72 PBR exemptions and 131 final permits.

**Figure 12: 2013 ARAQMD Issuance by Permit Type**



### **Permitted Facility Inspections**

After permit issuance, ARAQMD's staff continues to monitor the compliance status of air contaminant sources by periodically reviewing required monitoring data, records and reports. This includes witnessing a minimum of 50% of all performance tests conducted in ARAQMD's jurisdictional area, and reviewing test results to verify proper methodology and procedures were used to demonstrate compliance with permitted emission limitations. A total of 31 stack tests were performed in 2013, and 28 of those were witnessed by ARAQMD staff. Scheduled and unannounced site visits are also conducted to ensure air contaminant sources are in compliance with applicable permit terms, and state and federal regulations. Under contract with Ohio EPA, ARAQMD is required to inspect at least 50% of all Title V sources and 20% of all SMTV facilities each year. There are a total of 23 Title V facilities, 63 SMTV facilities, and 426 NTV facilities located in ARAQMD's 3-county jurisdictional area. A total of 15 TV facilities and 12 SMTV facilities were inspected in 2013.

Figure 13: Site Visits and FCEs in 2013

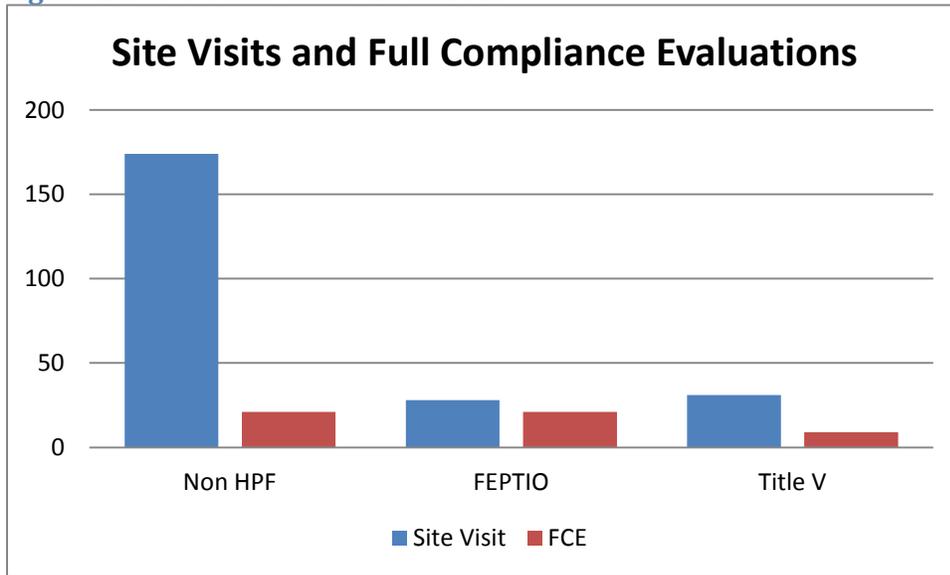
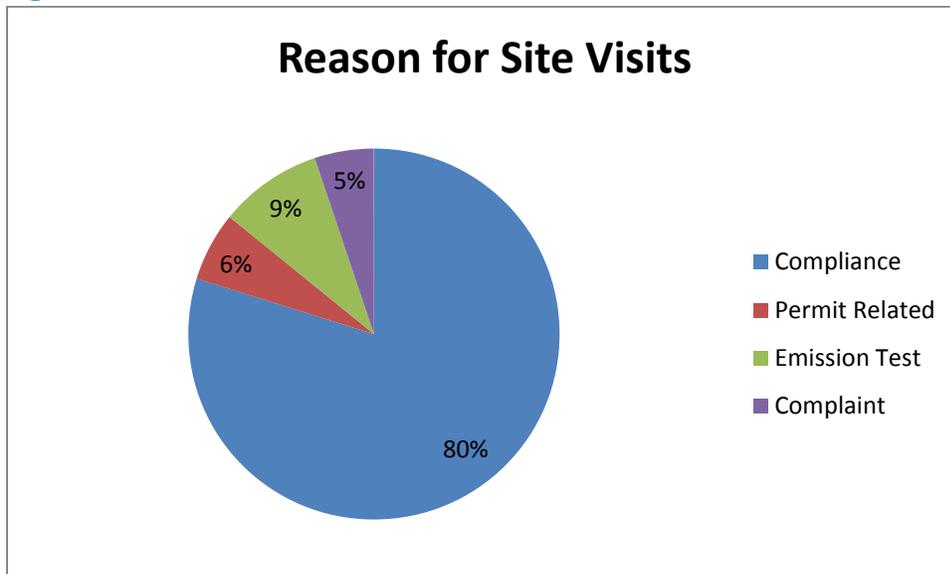


Figure 14: Reason for Site Visits



During the course of discussions about the local fee structure changes in 2012, it was a common theme that more interaction was desired between ARAQMD and the regulated NTV entities. To address this concern, a minor-source inspection schedule will be put into practice starting in 2014.

### Enforcement Section

In 2013, 29 enforcement cases were resolved and closed three of which were closed after formal enforcement proceedings. The remainder were closed either without enforcement because the facility

quickly resolved the Notice of Violation (NOV) or quickly provided additional information that justified closing the enforcement action.

## 2013 Enforcement Statistics

Cases Initiated with an NOV	27
Cases Closed without enforcement	29
Enforcement Action Requests	2
Enforcement Cases Closed	3

## Future Plans

### Strategic Plan

ARAQMD is creating a strategic plan to allow for more effective and efficient use of the public funds. We will be conducting projects to increase awareness of our agency name so that the work we do can be recognized and we can become models of best practices for other local air agencies (LAAs) across Ohio and the nation. The staff has been involved in many stages of the strategic planning process and there is great buy-in for this project.

Through staff discussions, we have created a mission statement, and identified public relations, communication with the constituents and quality improvement as topics to be focused on initially, with other goals and objectives to be identified in upcoming meetings. The aim of the ARAQMD strategic plan is to identify goals and objectives, which follow the mission statement, to guide the agency towards a five year future plan. The plan will be reviewed and revised annually with input from staff and management and the changes will be submitted to the ARAQMD Advisory Board for approval.

The mission statement which will direct ARAQMD into the future is:

*The mission of the Akron Regional Air Quality Management District (ARAQMD) is to protect the public from the adverse health impacts of air pollution and to educate the public about air quality issues.*

### Public Outreach and Education

Starting in October 2013, the Akron Public School's Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) School began working with ARAQMD to incorporate air quality topics into the fifth grade curriculum with a focus on implementing the 2B Technologies Global Ozone (GO3) program. The STEM school fifth graders will be the first group in Ohio to use the GO3 program. The GO3 curriculum brings air quality examples and topics into the students' education.

As of the spring semester of 2014, a section of Introduction to Environmental Health and Occupational Safety in the Department of Public Health at Kent State University (KSU) will be taught by a member of ARAQMD's staff. This course is one of the required environmental health courses being taught in the program. We are hopeful this partnership between ARAQMD and the university will increase our agency's exposure and introduce new air quality topics to the students.

The goals of these projects are to spark interest in these students and that they will steer their education towards the field of air quality. Once the topic of air quality is introduced and interest is fostered and mentored, the pool of prospective applicants for air quality jobs will be improved and the entire field of air quality can benefit. These projects will allow staff from ARAQMD to interact with students and teachers to mentor those who have an affinity for this field.

Additionally, SCPH staff members have been interacting with students from the KSU and University of Akron (UA) Nursing Schools and the medical students at the Northeast Ohio Medical University (NEOMED) for the past two years. This project allows the students to get an understanding of the work that environmental specialists and registered sanitarians do in the field. It also helps to more closely align future medical professionals with environmental and public health interests.

As part of the public outreach and education that ARAQMD does, we publish a quarterly newsletter, *The Air You Breathe*. The newsletter is mailed to over 1200 addresses and over 100 are emailed to readers. We are currently attempting to change the hardcopy subscribers to the emailed version to save on the environmental cost of publishing the newsletter. The newsletter is archived on the ARAQMD website as well.

Finally, January 1, 2015 marks the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of ARAQMD's official existence and an event is being planned to celebrate this milestone.

## **Conclusion**

ARAQMD underwent many changes in 2013, and there are many more planned to take the agency into the future as a model of best practices in the field of air quality. The staff of ARAQMD is looking forward to continuing the good work we have been doing and expanding the roles of the agency in protecting the public from the adverse effects from air pollution.