

Air Quality Awareness Week in 2025

Air Quality Awareness Week (AQAW) is May 5th to 9th this year. This annual event is dedicated to educating everyone about clean air, how important it is, and promoting actions to improve air quality.

AQAW was first organized by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and it's widely believed that the first AQAW was in 1999. The week usually features activities, educational campaigns, and community events in an effort to raise awareness about the sources of air pollution, how it affects your health, and what steps we can take to reduce the impact.

AQAW IS IMPORTANT and plays a critical role in highlighting the significance of air quality for public health and the environment. I can think of four reasons why AQAW is important:

1. Raising Awareness - AQAW helps to inform the public about the sources of air pollution, including industrial emissions, vehicle exhaust, and simple household activities such as mowing your yard with a gas mower in the afternoon. By understanding where pollution comes from, you can make informed decisions and actions to reduce your contribution to the problem.
2. Protecting Public Health - Poor air quality is linked to a range of health issues, including respiratory diseases, cardiovascular problems, and premature death. AQAW emphasizes the importance of clean air for maintaining good health and many local organizations in Austin/Travis County provide information on how to protect oneself from the harmful effects of air pollution.
3. Encouraging Policy Action – It is always the belief that awareness campaigns like AQAW can lead to increased public support for policies aimed at reducing air pollution. This can result in stronger air quality standards, improved enforcement of existing regulations, and the development of new technologies to monitor and reduce emissions.
4. Promoting Sustainable Practices - AQAW is promoted by organizations such as the Clean Air Coalition, CAPCOG, City of Austin and Clean Air Force just to name a few. These organizations diligently work together to encourage individuals and communities to adopt sustainable practices that reduce air pollution. Practices such as using public transportation, carpooling, reducing energy consumption, and supporting clean energy initiatives. These actions not only improve air quality but also contribute to overall environmental sustainability

In summary, the hope is that AQAW will initiate an opportunity for individuals to start something, to get involved, to come together and participate in events and activities that promote clean air. AQAW is a crucial event that brings attention to the importance of clean air and the actions needed to improve air quality. By raising awareness, AQAW helps to create a healthier and more sustainable future for all of us.