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# The Greatest Story Seldom Told – Profiles and Success Stories in Air Pollution Control: Association of Air Pollution Control Agencies July 2018 Report

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The Association of Air Pollution Control Agencies (“AAPCA”) announced in a July 2nd news release the 2018 edition of its report titled:

*The Greatest Story Seldom Told – Profiles and Success Stories in Air Pollution Control (“Report”)*

The news release notes that state and local air agencies have been at the forefront of significant progress in air quality achieved over the past several decades.

The Report catalogues air quality metrics and trends by using publicly available data from the United States Environmental Protection Agency and other agencies. The trends range from concentrations of criteria air pollutants and visibility progress in national parks to permitting and compliance and enforcement statistics. The Report, where applicable, presents the trend lines of both economic and social indicators that provide important context for air quality.

AAPCA President Stuart Spencer, Associate Director for the Arkansas Division for Air Quality, notes:

The remarkable progress that has been made in air quality is a great story that underscores the work of state and local air agencies. The 2018 edition of *The Greatest Story Seldom Told* continues to provide vital context for this improvement, and demonstrates that AAPCA members are dedicated to engaging with U.S. EPA and stakeholders to realize the best outcomes for air quality.

Key statistics from the Report include the following:

- As of 2016, combined emissions of the six criteria air pollutants for which there are national ambient air quality standards were down 73 percent since 1970.
- According to U.S. EPA’s analysis of 2016 monitoring data, there has been at least a 30-percent reduction in the ambient levels of carbon monoxide, lead, nitrogen dioxide, ozone and sulfur dioxide since 1980, and available monitoring data for fine and coarse particulate matter (PM2.5 and PM10) show similar trends.
- From 2006 to 2016, AAPCA Member States were responsible for approximately 66.5 percent of the national reduction in reported toxic air releases, accounting for more than 551-million pounds of the 829-million-pound total reduction.

- Between 1997 and 2017, AAPCA Member States reduced nitrogen oxide emissions by nearly 60 percent, from over 12,600 tons to less than 5,400 tons.
- As of 2016, AAPCA Member States had reduced electricity sector sulfur dioxide emissions by 9.3 million tons compared to 1990.
- From 2000 to 2015, the 20 states that comprise the AAPCA Board of Directors reduced energy-related carbon dioxide emissions by 337.4 million metric tons, accounting for more than 56 percent of cumulative national reductions.
- According to U.S. EPA's Enforcement and Compliance History Online (ECHO), states were the leaders in full compliance evaluations related to the Clean Air Act, conducting full compliance evaluations for more than 14,000 facilities in 2017, more than 80 times as many that were conducted by EPA.

The Association of Air Pollution Control Agencies (AAPCA) is a national, non-profit, consensus-driven organization focused on assisting state and local air quality agencies and personnel with implementation and technical issues associated with the federal Clean Air Act. AAPCA members work collaboratively on behalf of states and the communities they protect to act as a conduit for and provide feedback to federal regulators on air quality rules that have significant impacts across the entire nation. AAPCA represents more than 40 state and local air agencies, and senior officials from 20 state environmental agencies currently sit on AAPCA's Board of Directors. AAPCA is housed in Lexington, Kentucky as an affiliated association of The Council of State Governments (CSG).

A [copy of the Report](#) can be downloaded here.