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# The Greatest Story Seldom Told – Profiles and Success Stories in Air Pollution Control: Association of Air Pollution Control Agencies April 2017 Report

04/20/2017

The Association of Air Pollution Control Agencies (“AAPCA”) has released an April 2017 report titled:

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

The *Report* undertakes a detailed assessment of the air quality control improvements in both AAPCA member states and in the entire United States over the last several decades.

The intent of the *Report* is stated to include an effort to catalogue trends through publicly available data from the United States Environmental Protection Agency (and other agencies) to document success through what is characterized as the “framework of cooperative federalism, hard-working state and local air agencies”. The identification of various data appears to be an attempt to address public perception that air quality is not necessarily improving. The introduction notes:

Recent public opinion suggests that these trends, despite being supported by active public participation and market forces, have gone under the radar for most Americans. With media more likely to report bad news combined with often apocalyptic framing by advocates and limited understanding of air quality information, it is no wonder that the public is often confused about air quality in their city, county, state, and nation.

State and local air agencies are identified in the *Report* as “uniquely situated” to address public participation (i.e., “help bridge gaps”) “because of their experience in the community, proximity to the affected public, qualified personnel, and ability to interpret up-to-date air quality information.”

Arkansas Department of Environmental Quality Associate Director of the Office of Air Quality Stuart Spencer, who serves as Vice President of the AAPCA, is quoted in The Chattanooga as stating in regard to the *Report*:

AAPCA members, who have primary responsibility of air quality in parts of the country growing in population and economic activity, have demonstrated leadership across all key metrics of air quality success. The Greatest Story Seldom Told helps illustrate that, even under increasingly stringent national standards, these agencies are succeeding and innovating.

Besides the forward, introduction and chapter discussing “other air quality resources,” the Report contains three key sections which include:

- Laboratories of Progress: Highlights of AAPCA State Member Air Quality Successes
- Context for the Contest: Air Quality in America Compared to the Rest of the World
- Looking Up: Air Quality Trends in the United States

The AAPCA describes itself as a 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. The organization states that it represents more than 40 state and local air agencies and that senior officials from 20 state environmental agencies currently sit on its Board of Directors.

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