

How does the Clean Air Act affect your life?

Written by Administrator

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How Important Is Clean Air To You?



It seemed an easy way to see how important clean air is to my life. Thanks to the marvels of an internet connection and Google, I have several interesting ways to think about this question at my fingertips.

The amount of air that I breathe as an adult female is different than the amount of air that I would breathe if I were male or if I were a child. (Children breathe a high volume of air given their small size, because they need oxygen for all the body processes that help them grow.) Similarly the amount of air that I breathe depends a great deal upon what I'm doing. The volume of air I would breathe every minute doubles if I were to switch from walking to running 4 mph.

If you want a ballpark estimate (not tailored to age, sex, or activity profile) here are some numbers to consider:

- 2 gallons of air a minute.
- 20,000 breaths or 35 pounds of air a day.
- 625 million breaths a lifetime. That's a volume equivalent to 2 football fields, seventeen stories high!

That's a lot of air- and I'm grateful for the steps the Clean Air Act has taken to keep it clean.

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While it's easy to look to our own lungs and our own [health](#) to find good reasons to celebrate the successes of the Clean Air Act, it's important that we don't forget some more subtle, yet critical, successes of the Act:

- Wildlife have benefited from the Clean Air Act just like people.
- The Clean Air Act is reducing acid rain and helping acidic lakes in the Adirondacks start to recover.
- The Clean Air Act is helping to reduce ozone pollution from Los Angeles, which damaged the ponderosa pine in California's San Bernardino National Forest.
- The Clean Air Act is regulating mercury pollution, which prevents anglers from eating the fish they catch in many of our nation's lakes.

Wildlife enthusiasts have these reasons, and many more, to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the Act.

To highlight these successes of the Clean Air Act and consider what can be done to continue the successes of the Clean Air Act in it's next 40 years, the National Wildlife Federation has prepared a fact sheet on the [Clean Air Act and Wildlife](#) . We invite you to take a look!