

**Air Quality Management Division
Division Director Staff Report
Board Meeting Date: July 23, 2026**

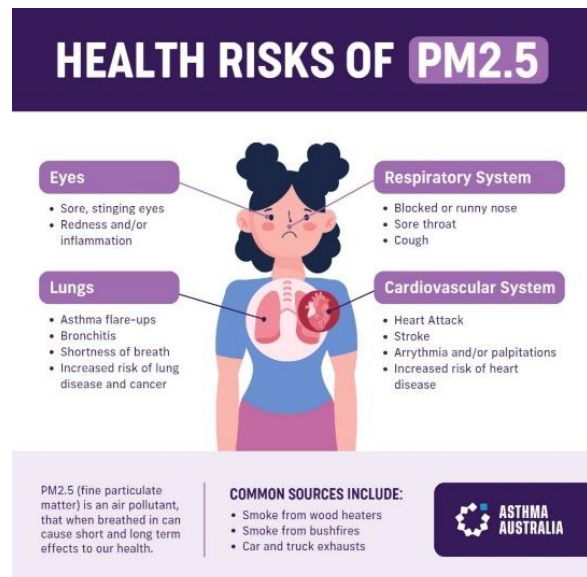
DATE: July 6, 2026
TO: District Board of Health
FROM: Francisco Vega, P.E., Division Director
775-784-7211; fvega@nnph.org
SUBJECT: **Air Quality Management** – DC Circuit Upholds 2024 PM NAAQS, Divisional Update, Program Reports, Monitoring and Planning, Permitting and Compliance.

1. Program Update

a. DC Circuit Upholds 2024 PM NAAQS

On June 26, 2026, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit issued a unanimous decision upholding the federal government's updated air quality standards for fine particulate matter, commonly known as soot or PM2.5. This ruling firmly establishes the annual health-based limit at 9.0 micrograms per cubic meter, lower than the previous standard of 12.0 micrograms. The court affirmed that federal environmental agencies have the clear legal authority to update these pollution limits when supported by updated scientific data. By resolving these outstanding legal questions, the court has provided a clear and definitive regulatory framework for local air districts and states moving forward.

The decision carries important balancing considerations for both public health and the local economy. From a health perspective, lowering the allowable amount of fine particles in the air is designed to reduce respiratory illnesses, protect vulnerable populations like children and the elderly, and lower overall healthcare costs. At the same time, this stricter standard presents practical challenges for business and industry. Companies looking to expand or build new facilities may face more stringent permitting requirements, which will likely require investments in advanced emissions-filtering technologies and cleaner operational practices.



As a next step, our agency will continue to evaluate how these updated federal standards apply to Washoe County. Based on our current data, our region is in attainment with this

lower 9.0 microgram standard. Moving forward, we will maintain our robust air monitoring network to track local particle levels and carefully evaluate the data to ensure our ambient air remains fully protective of public health. We remain committed to working collaboratively with local businesses and community stakeholders to preserve our excellent air quality while supporting sustainable economic growth in Northern Nevada.

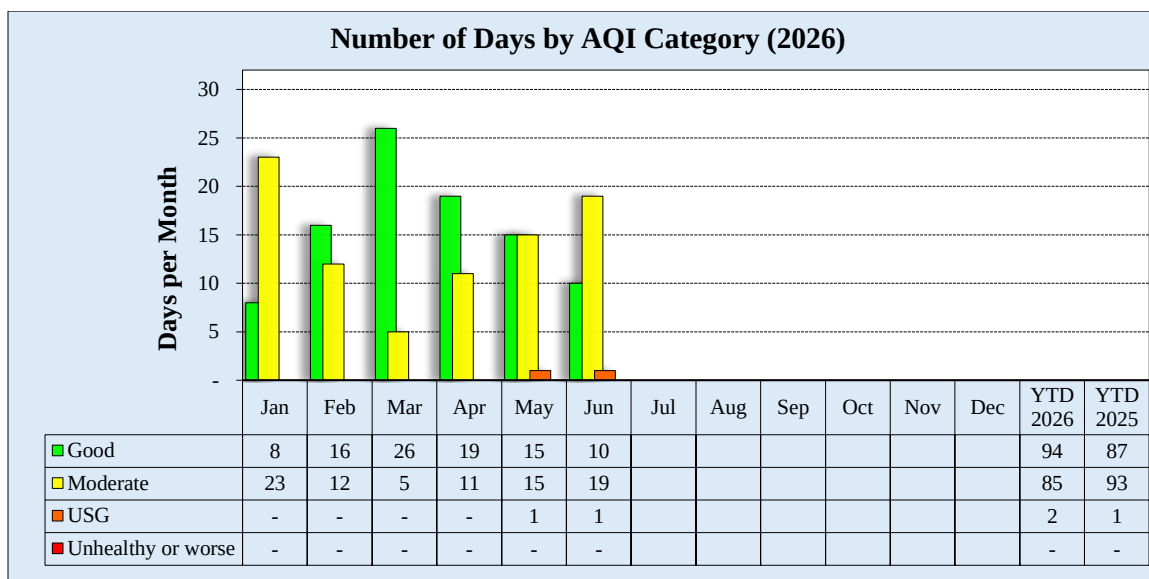
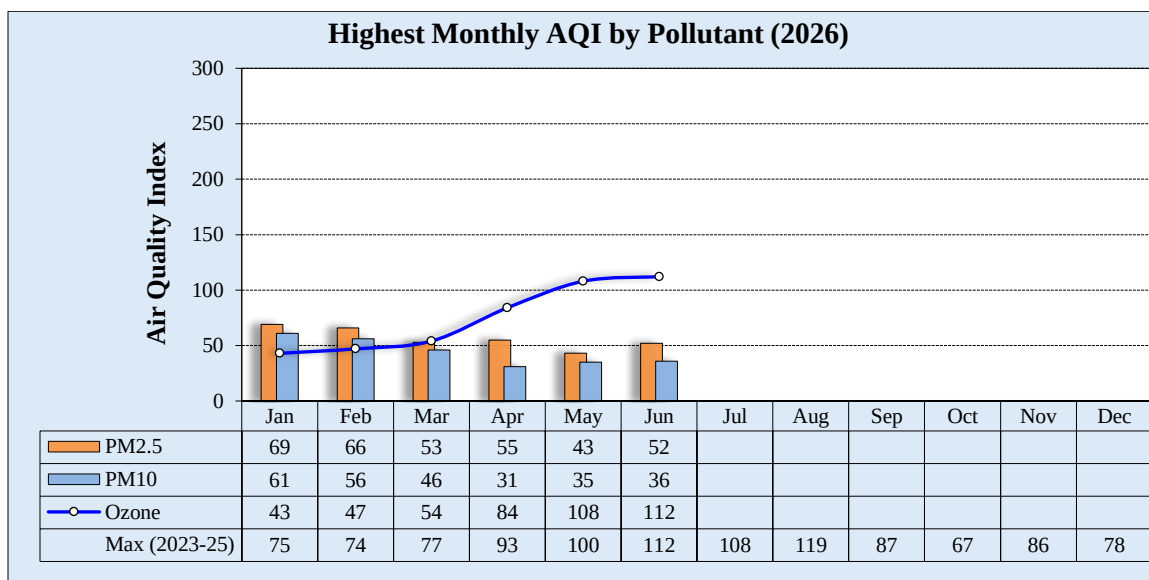
For additional information, please refer to the information below.

<https://media.cadc.uscourts.gov/opinions/docs/2026/06/24-1050-2180564.pdf>

Francisco Vega, P.E., MBA
Division Director

Divisional Update

- a. Below are two charts detailing the most recent ambient air monitoring data. The top chart indicates the highest Air Quality Index (AQI) by pollutant and includes the highest AQI from the previous three (3) years in the data table, for comparison. The bottom chart indicates the number of days by AQI category and includes the previous year to date for comparison.



Ambient air monitoring data in these charts represent midnight to midnight concentrations to illustrate comparisons to the NAAQS. These data are neither fully verified nor validated and should be considered PRELIMINARY. As such, the data should not be used to formulate or support regulation, guidance, or any other governmental or public decision.

2. Program Reports

a. Monitoring and Planning

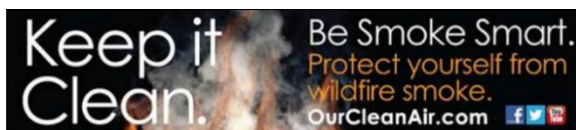
June Air Quality: There was one exceedance of the ozone and no exceedances of the PM₁₀, or PM_{2.5} National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS). The highest ozone, PM_{2.5}, and PM₁₀ concentrations for the month are listed in the table below.

Pollutant	Concentration	Date(s)	Site(s)	Notes
Ozone (8-hour)	0.074 ppm	6/05	Verdi	-
PM _{2.5} (24-hour)	9.5 µg/m ³	6/17	Verdi	-
PM ₁₀ (24-hour)	39 µg/m ³	6/18	Sparks	-

Ozone Season: Ozone is a summertime pollutant of concern in Washoe County. While ozone in the upper atmosphere protects us from UV radiation, ground-level ozone – formed by reactions between nitrogen oxides (NO_x) and volatile organic compounds (VOCs) in sunlight – is harmful to health and a major component of smog. Major sources of NO_x and VOCs include vehicle exhaust, industrial facilities, power plants, gasoline vapors, and solvents. Breathing ozone can cause chest pain, coughing, throat irritation, and worsen conditions like asthma, bronchitis, and emphysema. It can also reduce lung function, inflame lung tissue, and may cause permanent lung damage with repeated exposure. For more information on how you can help reduce ozone pollution, visit AQMD's "[nOzone](#)" program page.



Be Smoke Smart: Smoke and air pollution concentrations can change rapidly during wildfires. PM_{2.5} concentrations can worsen and reach harmful levels in just a few hours. AQMD developed the "[Keep it Clean, Be Smoke Smart](#)" campaign to provide current wildfire and smoke information for the community. "Be Smoke Smart" is a great resource to answer basic questions about wildfires such as: Where is the fire? Where is the smoke going to be? What is the current air quality? What should I do to protect myself? AQMD partners with the National Weather Service and local media to educate the public on how to make good decisions when wildfire smoke affects Northern Nevada.



Craig A. Petersen
Supervisor, Monitoring and Planning

b. Permitting and Compliance

June Permitting Activity

In June 2026, staff reviewed fifty-four (54) sets of plans submitted to the Reno, Sparks, and Washoe County Building Departments to ensure compliance with Air Quality requirements. Year-to-date, staff have reviewed three hundred thirty-three (333) plans in calendar year 2026, with ninety-nine (99) percent completed within the required timeframes.

AQMD 2026 Plan Review				
Month	Plans Received	Avg. Days to Complete	Percent Timely Completions	Untimely Reviews
January	44	3.2	100%	0
February	48	3.125	98%	1
March	55	3.4	98%	1
April	61	3.3	100%	0
May	71	3.1	100%	0
June	54	3.7	100%	0
July	-	-	-	-
August	-	-	-	-
September	-	-	-	-
October	-	-	-	-
November	-	-	-	-
January	-	-	-	-
Total	333	3.3	99%	2

In June 2026, staff issued three (3) Permit to Operate (PTO) renewals for existing stationary source facilities in Washoe County. All three (3) renewals were processed within the required 180-day timeframe following receipt of complete applications. Eight (8) PTOs are due to expire on December 1, 2026. Two (2) of these facilities submitted a timely renewal application between 270 and 180 days prior to this expiration date.

During the month, sixteen (16) Dust Control Permits were issued, authorizing an additional two hundred sixty-one (261) acres of soil disturbance.

Staff processed a total of nine hundred fifteen (915) registrations associated with the Wood-burning Device Program, including Certificates of Compliance, Dealers Affidavits of Sale, and Notices of Exemption. Processing these registrations resulted in the removal of sixteen (16) uncertified wood-burning devices from properties.

To meet the requirements of the Asbestos Program, staff reviewed applications and surveys for the issuance of sixty-five (65) Acknowledgements of Asbestos Assessment for

construction projects across Washoe County. Staff also reviewed and issued fourteen (14) Asbestos Demolition and Renovation notifications.

Permits and Registrations Processed	2026		2025	
	June	YTD	June	Annual Total
PTO Renewal Issued	4	17	No Data	No Data
PTC Issued	0	7	1	48
Dust Control Permit	16 (261 acres)	84 (986 acres)	24 (185 acres)	196 (2,969 acres)
Wood-burning COC	22 (8 removals)	145 (32 removals)	32	271
Wood-burning DAS	4 (4 replacements)	22 (12 replacements)	3 (2 replacements)	83 (47 replacements)
Wood-burning NOE	889 (4 removals)	3,824 (19 removals)	749 (5 removals)	7,618
Asbestos Assessments	65	325	65	658
Asbestos Notifications	14	69	12	141

June Compliance Activity

In June 2026, staff conducted forty-one (41) assigned PTO inspections and two (2) PTC approval inspections at stationary source facilities. Staff were assigned seven (7) new asbestos abatement projects, involving the removal of approximately ninety-nine thousand seven hundred ten (99,710) square feet and eight hundred eighty-nine (889) linear feet of asbestos-containing materials. In addition, staff received seven (7) facility demolition projects to monitor. During the month, staff documented forty-six (46) Dust Control Permit inspections.

Compliance Inspections	2026		2025	
	June	YTD	June	Annual Total
Permit to Operate	41	222	37	445
Permit to Construct	2	14	0	30
Dust Control Permit	64	281	47	542
Wood-burning Device	4	19	5	47
Asbestos Notification	24	108	26	285

During the month, staff responded to twenty-three (23) complaints filed with the AQMD.

Complaints	2026		2025	
	June	YTD	June	Annual Total
Asbestos	1	5	4	13
Diesel Idling	2	3	0	0
Dust	10	53	15	89
Nuisance Odor	5	25	1	23
Permit to Operate	0	3	0	4
Burn Code	0	7	0	3
General	5	46	5	67
TOTAL	23	142	25	199
Enforcement	2026		2025	
	June	YTD	June	Annual Total
Warnings	6	16	0	39
Notice of Violations	1	5	0	20
TOTAL	7	21	0	59

Joshua C. Restori
Supervisor, Permitting & Compliance