

Montana is ‘Big Sky Country’ for a reason. Strong, enforceable air regulations are crucial to ensuring our skies are not just big, but also clean. As Montanans we have a fundamental right to a “clean and healthful environment,” including clean air. And just as few places have avoided human impact on the ground, the air we breathe is susceptible to a multitude of sources of human pollution. Intensive agriculture, excess methane production, land use changes, increasing forest fires, and fossil fuel burning all contribute to the degradation of air quality. We know air pollution contributes directly to lowering water quality in our rivers and streams. And we know a growing population will continue to demand an increase in all of these pollution sources.



Montana Audubon recognizes that the use of renewable energy, by directly lowering the amount of greenhouse gases emitted into the atmosphere compared to fossil fuels, is an important step towards maintaining clean air. While moving towards clean energy standards promotes clean air, other proactive actions can take the form of local, state, or federal local air pollution control programs, emissions standards, hazardous waste management controls, the control of specific airborne contaminants (like mercury), and much more. The undeniable importance of clean air drives our policy positions.

The policy of Montana Audubon regarding Air Quality is to:

- Educate the public and decision makers about the connection between air quality, human health, wildlife, wildlife habitat, and the environment
- Work to strengthen enforceable local, state, and federal clean air standards
- Raise awareness of climate change’s direct connection to air quality
- Encourage the use of tax policies that proactively move towards renewable energy and energy efficiency
- Encourage the use of emissions, energy efficiency, and other pollution standards