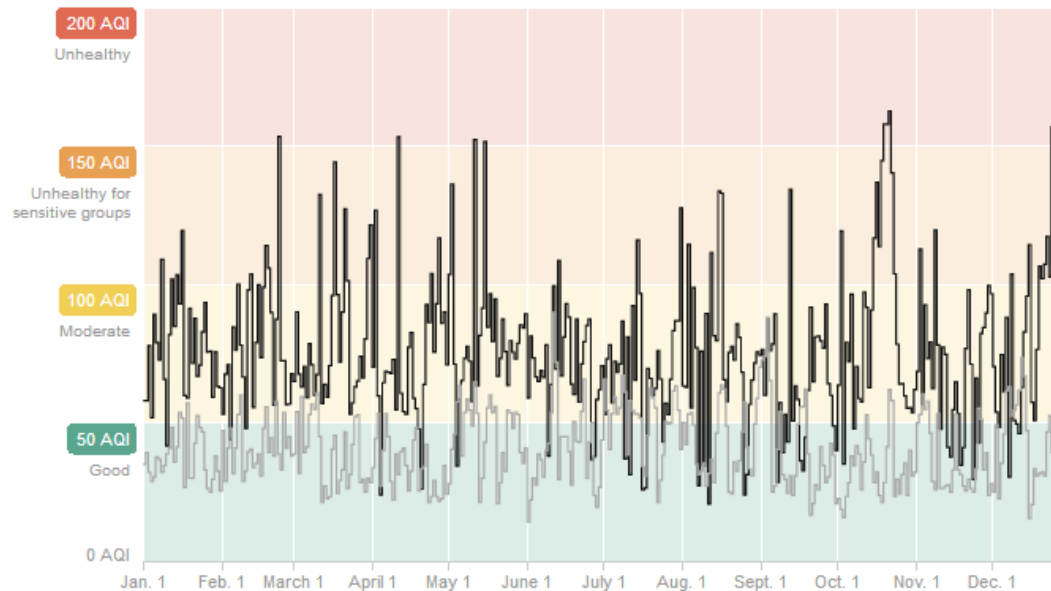


Air Pollution Problem in Korea

Main
Organization

Secondary
Organization

1 About 50 million people in Korea are breathing unsafe, unclean air throughout year. The high level
2 of air pollution in Korea comes from several sources. Locally, Korea's use of about 50 coal plants and diesel
3 fuel contributes to air pollution. Internationally, yellow dust from China's northern deserts picks up
4 industrial pollutants on its way to Korea. When people breathe, harmful pollution may enter the body. PM
5 2.5 dust may contain lead, arsenic, and other pollutants. These particles are linked to heart disease,
6 cancers, and early deaths. Air quality data from Seoul shows how serious the problem is. The Air Quality
7 Index (AQI) is the average of the hourly measurements taken throughout a day. Seoul does not score well
8 for air quality. It only received a good AQI about 44 days in 2015. Most of the year, Seoul receives a
9 Moderate score between 50 and 100. However, Seoul also receives an Unhealthy/Sensitive rating 45 days a
10 year. This means Seoul has a good AQI about as often as an Unhealthy rating. Seoul received lower AQI
11 scores than other international cities. Los Angeles had 7 days in the Unhealthy/Sensitive category. In New
12 York, no single day's AQI fell in the "Unhealthy" range. Matthew Shapiro, a professor from the Illinois
13 Institute of Technology, notes that the general public needs to be made more aware of the complexity of
14 the air pollution problem. Advising people to stay indoors or wear masks is not a long-term solution to the
15 problem.



Source: City of Seoul Research Institute of Public Health and Environment, EPA Air Quality Index calculator, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Credit: Matt Stiles for NPR

Sources

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/donaldkirk/2016/05/13/yellow-dust-from-china-or-korean-industry-nasa-scientists-sample-skies-for-sources-of-pollution/#76556a5e6047>

<http://www.npr.org/sections/parallels/2016/06/03/478796463/koreas-air-is-dirty-but-its-not-all-close-neighbor-chinas-fault>