

Air quality concerns and responses to alerts

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency monitors air quality in communities across the nation to protect the public's health.

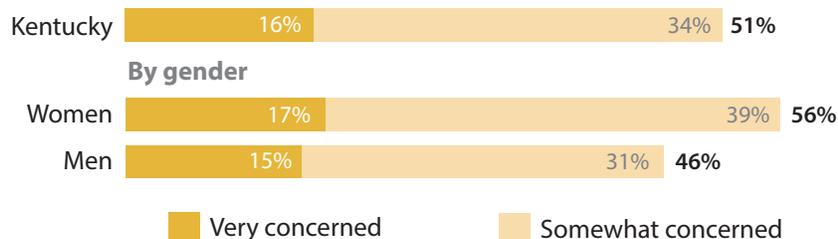
It uses the data to report a daily Air Quality Index.¹ Communities can use the Air Quality Index to warn the public when the amount of ozone or particle pollution in the air may cause adverse health effects. Air pollution can cause upper respiratory infections and allergic reactions, and can aggravate symptoms for people with asthma and emphysema.

When air quality is at an unhealthy level, people can *protect themselves* by limiting outdoor activities or avoiding heavy exertion. This may be even more important for those sensitive to air pollution, such as children with asthma. People can also help *protect others* by combining short car trips and turning off their car engine when they are not moving to reduce the amount they pollute.

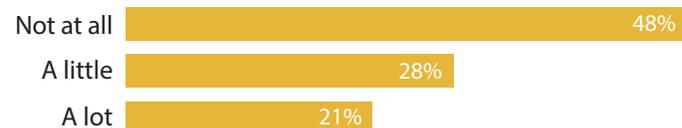
To learn how Kentuckians are responding to environmental health

¹ Available at www.airnow.gov

How concerned are you with the quality of air in your community? (Graph shows only those who said they were concerned.)



When you hear of an air quality alert being issued, how much do you change or limit your activities? (Percentages do not add to 100% because "don't know" is not included.)



issues such as air pollution, the 2012 **Kentucky Health Issues Poll (KHIP)** included several questions about air quality.

Majority concerned about air quality

More than half of Kentucky adults (51%) said they were very or somewhat concerned about the quality of air in their community. Women (56%) were more likely than men (46%) to be concerned about air quality.

Nearly half don't change behaviors with air alert

When an air quality alert is issued, nearly half (48%) of Kentucky adults said they do not change or limit their activities at all. Nearly 3 in 10 (28%) reported that they change or limit their activities a little, and 2 in 10 (21%) said they change their activities a lot.

Experts recommend turning off a waiting car after 10 seconds to

Continued on back

These findings unless otherwise noted are from the Kentucky Health Issues Poll, funded by the Foundation for a Healthy Kentucky and The Health Foundation of Greater Cincinnati. The Kentucky Health Issues Poll was conducted Sept. 20-Oct. 14, 2012, by the Institute for Policy Research at the University of Cincinnati. A random sample of 1,680 adults from throughout Kentucky was interviewed by telephone. This included 1,360 landline interviews and 320 cell phone interviews with cell phone users. In 95 of 100 cases, the statewide estimates will be accurate to $\pm 2.5\%$. There are other sources of variation inherent in public opinion studies, such as non-response, question wording, or context effects that can introduce error or bias.

For more information about the Kentucky Health Issues Poll, please visit www.healthy-ky.org or www.healthfoundation.org/kentucky-health-issues-poll.

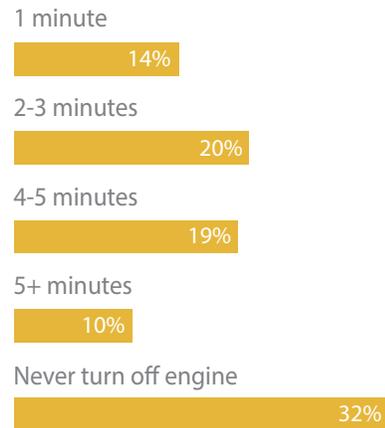
save gas and limit emissions. Most Kentucky adults wait much longer. More than 6 in 10 Kentucky adults (61%) said they would wait at least four minutes before turning off their car engine when in a waiting car and not moving, as in a traffic jam, at a train crossing or at a drive-through. This includes the 3 in 10 adults (32%) who said they never turn off their car engine.

Women (25%) were more likely than men (17%) to change or limit their activities a lot when an air quality alert is issued. However, men (16%) were slightly more likely than women (12%) to turn off their car engines after one minute when they were in a waiting car and not moving.

There was some regional variation in responses to all questions covered above. Regional differences in responses to these questions will be covered in more depth in a future publication.

When you are waiting in your car and not moving ... how long do you usually wait before turning off your car engine?*

(Percentages do not add to 100% because the response "don't know" is not included.)



*Experts recommend turning off a waiting car after 10 seconds to save gas and limit emissions.