

# 2026 STATE OF THE AIR REPORT

(AMERICAN LUNG ASSOCIATION)

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# Background

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- American Lung Association (ALA)
  - Reports status of the air quality for the whole country every year
  - Report includes weighted scores and grades for each county in the Washington, DC-Baltimore-Northern Virginia Combined Metropolitan Statistical Area (CSA)
  - Also reports top 25 most polluted CSAs/MSAs and counties for ozone and PM2.5 (24-hour & annual)

# ALA Methodology

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- Used data for 2022-24 time period for the 2026 report.
  - Used number of code orange and above days instead of Design Value to calculate Weighted Scores/Grades/Ranks for Ozone & 24-Hour PM2.5 for CSAs/MSAs and counties. Weighted Average (WA) reflects number and severity of unhealthy days (orange/red/purple)
  - Weighting Factors by Color Category
    - Orange (Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups) → 1.0
    - Red (Unhealthy) → 1.5
    - Purple (Very Unhealthy) → 2.0
    - Maroon (Hazardous) → 2.5
- Grading thresholds (Ozone & 24-hr PM2.5):  
A = 0.0, B = 0.3–0.9, C = 1.0–2.0, D = 2.1–3.2, F ≥ 3.3
- Used Design Value to assign grades/ranks for Annual PM2.5 for CSAs/MSAs and counties
    - Annual PM2.5: Pass ≤ 9.0 µg/m<sup>3</sup>, Fail > 9.0 µg/m<sup>3</sup>

# ALA Rankings for Washington, DC- Baltimore-Northern Virginia

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**ALA ranked top 25 most polluted CSAs/MSAs in 2026 report**

- Ozone: No jurisdiction in the list
- 24-Hour & Annual PM2.5: No jurisdiction in the list

# ALA Grades & Scores

(Washington, DC-MD-VA 2015 Ozone Nonattainment Area Jurisdictions)

Jurisdiction	Ozone	24-Hour PM2.5	Annual PM2.5
District of Columbia	F (4.5)	D (3.2)	Pass
Charles	C (1.3)	-	-
Calvert	B (0.7)	-	-
Fredrick	D (2.3)	-	-
Montgomery	C (1.3)	C(1.5)	Pass
Prince George's	F (4.5)	C(1.5)	Pass
Alexandria	-	-	-
Arlington	D (2.7)	C (1.0)	Pass
Fairfax	D (2.3)	D (3.0)	Pass
Loudoun	C (1.3)	C (1.3)	Pass
Prince William	C (1.0)	-	-



# Conclusion

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- This report does not exclude wildfires influenced data in 2023.
- Jurisdictions in the Washington, DC region are not among the most polluted (Top 25) areas identified in the ALA report.
- Air quality metrics for the Washington, DC region show some improvement in 2026 relative to the 2025 report
- Most jurisdictions show some improvement in weighted scores/grades for ozone compared to the 2025 report
- All jurisdictions show some improvement in weighted scores and all have passing grades for PM2.5