

Blue Mountains and Lithgow Air Watch

The EPA is leading a 12-month air quality monitoring project in the Blue Mountains and Lithgow.

Key points

- The project will provide a better picture of air quality in the region and help inform future initiatives to protect air quality
- We can all play a part in keeping our air clean
- Changing our habits, such as reducing the use of wood burning heaters and the use of cars, can help to improve local air quality.

What is the Air Watch project?

Blue Mountains and Lithgow Air Watch is a 12-month air quality monitoring project.

The project will start in May 2019 and run until May 2020, providing a better picture of air quality in the region. The project involves:

- one temporary air quality monitoring station in Katoomba which measures fine particles (PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5}), sulfur dioxide, carbon monoxide, ozone, oxides of nitrogen, visibility and meteorology
- 12 KOALA air quality sensors in Katoomba, Springwood, Wentworth Falls (Boddington Hill) and Lithgow which measure fine particles (PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5}) and carbon monoxide.

What is a KOALA sensor?

KOALA (Knowing Our Ambient Local Air) sensors are reliable, low cost sensors developed by the Queensland University of Technology. The sensors will provide further trends on air quality across the region, enhancing the information obtained during the project. Data from the 12

KOALA sensors can not be compared against national air quality standards.

Who is involved?

Blue Mountains and Lithgow Air Watch is run by the NSW Environment Protection Authority (EPA) in conjunction with a range of Blue Mountains community groups and volunteers, the Office of Environment and Heritage (OEH), Blue Mountains City and Lithgow councils, Doctors for the Environment, Western Sydney University, and the Nepean Blue Mountains Local Health District.

Local businesses, schools and volunteers are key partners in the project; as they host and help to maintain the KOALA sensors for 12 months.

The project involves collaboration with air quality monitoring experts, including OEH, who will operate the temporary Katoomba station for 12 months, the Queensland University of Technology who will help operate the KOALA sensors, and the University of Western Sydney, who will help analyse the data.

Where can I find more information?

More information about the Blue Mountains and Lithgow Air Watch project can be found on the EPA website at www.epa.nsw.gov.au/your-environment/air/regional-air-quality/blue-mountains-and-lithgow-air-watch.

Data from the Katoomba air quality monitoring station is available in near real time on the OEH website at

www.environment.nsw.gov.au/topics/air/current-air-quality/special-projects-monitoring.

Data from the 12 KOALA sensors is available in near real-time at bluemountains.sensors.net.au.

If you have any questions or concerns, call the 24/7 NSW Environment Line on 131 555.

NSW Environment Protection Authority

Email: info@epa.nsw.gov.au

Website: www.epa.nsw.gov.au

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