

Running Head: POLLUTION: AN ON GOING PROBLEM

Pollution: An On Going Problem

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High School

Sample Paper #1

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Abstract

Pollution is an on going problem that many people do not see. The Clean Air Act was passed in 1963 in order to protect public health and ensure that all American's have clean air to breathe. It is still effective today and needed in order to continue the progress to clean air and lower pollution levels in the United States. Since the Clean Air Act was established, pollution has dropped significantly even ^{though} ~~when~~ the population and energy use has nearly doubled since 1970, when the main provisions to the Act were passed. The Clean Air Act has been a major part to cleaning up the air in the United States, as well as protecting the people's health. It is a necessity to the United States.

Pollution: An On Going Problem

As America grows everyday, so does the pollution. However, there have been some things done to reduce the polluting of the air American's breathe.

Policy Identification

The Clean Air Act is a law that was originally established in 1963 in order to reduce ~~the~~ air pollution nationwide. Since 1970, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has had a huge part in the Clean Air Act. In this Act, the EPA sets restrictions such as how many pollutants can be in the air in the United States and limits emissions coming from chemical plants, utilities, and steel mills.

History

Ensuring all Americans have safe air to breathe is the reason behind the federal law known as the Clean Air Act. The main goal of the Act is public health protection, although it also helps to protect the environment from air pollution ^{"What is Clean Air?"} (<http://www.cleanairtrust.org/cleanairact.html>, 1999). The United States did not begin to focus its attention on how air pollution has an effect on public health until 1963, when the original Clean Air Act was passed (Holmstead, 2005). It was first introduced to create funding for the study and reduce air pollution. However, there was no real federal response to clean up the air until 1970, when Congress passed the Clean Air Act. Here it was amended and the core provisions of the Clean Air Act were passed ("History of the", 2008).

Four major programs were created in 1970, including: the National Ambient Air Quality Standards, State Implementation Plans, New Source Performance Standards, and National Emission Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants. From then on, the Act

started targeting six major pollutants, including carbon monoxide, nitrogen dioxide, sulfur dioxide, ozone, particulate matter, and lead ("Clean Air Act," 2004). Congress then created the EPA on May 2, 1971, and it was given the main responsibility of carrying out the law. Since then, the EPA has been working with many Clean Air Act programs for the reduction of nationwide air pollution. States, tribes, and local governments also do a lot to meet the requirements of the Act ("Understanding the Clean," 2008).

In 1977, major amendments were added to the Clean Air Act. These amendments mainly dealt with the requirements for the Prevention of Significant Deterioration of air quality in areas holding the National Ambient Air Quality Standards ("History of the," 2008).

"The 1977 Clean Air Act Amendments also contained requirements pertaining to sources in non-attainment areas for National Ambient Air Quality Standards. A non-attainment area is a geographic area that does not meet one or more of the federal air quality standards. Both of these 1977 Clean Air Act Amendments established major permit review requirements to ensure attainment and maintenance of the National Ambient Air Quality Standards" ("History of the," 2008).

The Clean Air Act was revised and expanded in 1990 to specify new strategies as well as extend deadlines. It also increased the right and responsibility of the government in the Clean Air Act. Provisions regarding stratospheric ozone protection, increased enforcement authority, and expanded research programs were among the other provisions ("History of the," 2008).

This time the EPA had more authority to make and enforce regulation to reduce air pollutant emissions. This also created more focus on cost-effective ways to reduce pollution of air. The EPA is in charge of setting limits to some air pollutants and how much can be in the air in the U.S. ^{1x} They ^{2x} work to ensure environmental protection from air pollutants and guarantee basic health for all Americans. The EPA also has the right to limit emissions coming from things such as chemical plants, steel mills, and utilities. Every state and tribe has to meet every pollution limit that the EPA sets. However, they may go beyond this and create stronger pollution laws. Their plans must be approved by the EPA for reducing air pollution. EPA is allowed to ^{impose} give punishments on the states if a plan does not meet ^{the} requirements. They are also able to take over and enforce the Clean Air Act, if needed in some areas. However, the EPA does help the local, tribal and state agencies. With the help of Congress, the EPA has provided billions of dollars to these agencies since 1970. They also provide research, studies, and designs to help support the clean air progress for state, tribal, and local agencies ("Understanding the Clean," 2008)

In order to know how much a state will control air pollution, each individual state must create State Implementation Plans, or SIPs, under the Clean Air Act. It is a set of regulations, programs, and policies the state will exercise in order to clean up the polluted areas. States are also capable of making solutions that ^{require} need special understanding from factors such as local industries, geography, housing, and travel patterns. Tribal nations also have a role in the Clean Air Act ("Understanding the Clean," 2008).

Since the 1990 revision of the Act, Indian Tribes have had the right to apply control programs for air pollution. Under the EPA's Tribal Authority Rule, tribes get to develop air quality management programs, as well as write rules to decrease air pollution that they are able to enforce in Indian Country. Tribes are only allowed to the parts of the Clean Air Act that are right for their lands ("History of the," 2008).

Current Situation

"The urgency of the current situation cannot be overemphasized: The latest scientific research tells us that global warming is accelerating at a rate beyond previous expectations, and that the window for a timely response is closing quickly" (Northrop & Sassoon, 2008). Scientists agree that, within the next seven years, greenhouse gases must be stabilized or the world will be faced with unexpected climate-related catastrophes. The Clean Air Act is under discussion among legal authorities, politicians, and policy experts in order to use it to manage greenhouse gas emissions. This would not ^{require} need the use of a new legislation and would be a legal grip. Under the Clean Air Act, carbon dioxide emissions are a pollutant and can be regulated by the EPA. In fact, Obama is said to declare carbon dioxide, under the Clean Air Act, as a dangerous pollutant. He would use the Act to limit emissions (Northrop & Sassoon, 2008).

The EPA could set emission standards for new sources of pollution. They do have the right to control sources of pollution directly. The Clean Air Act brings out an equivalent, lower-costing, and quicker road for creating a national carbon market rather than creating a new legislation (Northrop & Sassoon, 2008).

The EPA is now getting recommendations on how to connect the Clean Air Act to help greenhouse gas emissions. California is an example of how this could work to

reduce greenhouse gases. The state asked the EPA for a waiver to enforce more strict auto-emissions standards than the federal restrictions do. After this, 17 other states tried to take on the same standards. However, the Bush EPA denied them. The new president, being Obama, could have the power to cut greenhouse gas emissions. The Clean Air Act could bring greenhouse emissions under control, and that is the solution to the problem Obama is facing (Northrop & Sassoon, 2008).

Differing Viewpoints

Concerning the policy of the Clean Air Act, there are two differing viewpoints. One view wants to keep the Clean Air Act and keep it the way it is. A differing viewpoint is one to put the "Clear Skies Act" into place, which in turn, would weaken the Clean Air Act.

While the American Lung Association supports the Clean Air Act, they oppose the Clean Skies Act ("Tell your Representatives," 2004). The Clear Skies Act, originally proposed in 2002 would weakened the Clean Air Act ("Clear Skies Proposal," 2008)

The Clear Skies Act would provide some communities with cleaner air but leave other communities out. The Clear Skies Act is a more market-based approach to save Americans millions of dollars ("Executive Summary," 2002). A lot of communities would still be exposed to more pollution even though it would provide some net reductions for pollution. This plan, proposed originally by Bush, would relax the cap on nitrogen oxide and weaken protections under the Clean Air Act. More gases such as Nitrogen Oxide, Sulphur Dioxide, and Mercury would be allowed into the air under the Clear Skies Act. This is more than what would be allowed under the Clean Air Act. It would make a loophole so the power plants would not be held accountable for the New Source Review

(NRS) from the Clean Air Act. In order to meet the NRS standards, power plants must follow the current federal emissions limits ("Clear Skies Proposal," 2008).

The American Lung Association says the Clean Air Act would supply more pollution reductions faster than the Clear Skies Act. They say that the "Clear Skies Act" would cancel enforcement programs in the Clean Air Act. This would weaken the ability of citizens to be protected from air pollution in their states. According to the *American Lung Association State of the Air: 2004* report, strict enforcement of the Clean Air Act is needed. This was done with 46 million people who lived in counties where the air tests failed every time. It reported that "159 million Americans live in counties with unhealthy levels of either ozone or particle pollution; 46 million people live in counties where the air fails every test" ("Tell your Representatives," 2004).

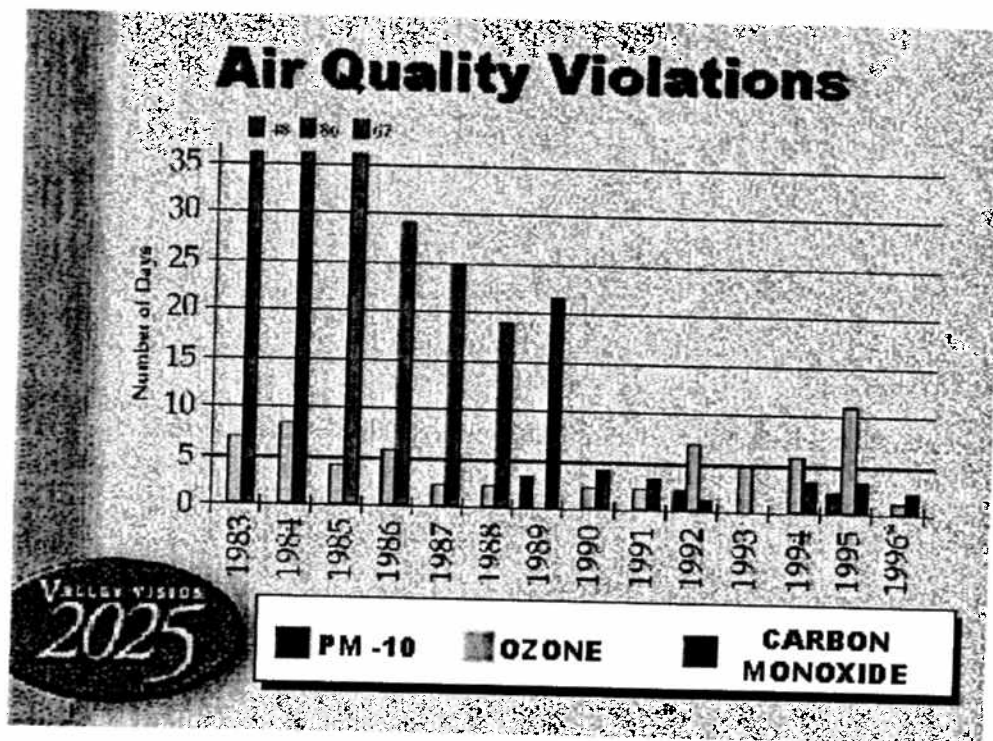
The two views are similar in that they both want to decrease pollution. However, one would keep the Clean Air Act as it is and one would make changes that would weaken restrictions under the Clean Air Act.

Policy Recommendation

The Clean Air Act is effective. In order to continue the progress toward clean air and reduce pollution in the United States, current programs under the Clean Air Act should be maintained. The air quality standards have helped lead to new technologies and lead to a major decrease in pollution. There have been decreases in the amount of the main pollutants. Emissions have dropped more than half from 1970 to 2005 (Holmstead, 2005). Many analyses have also ^{shown} ~~showed~~ that the Clean Air Act has and will continue to be successful, especially in a net economic benefit ("Clean Air Act," 2004).

Since the 1970 Clean Air Act improvements, there ^{have} been extensive progress in the country's air quality management system. Air quality standards under the Clean Air Act helped lead the way to development of new technologies that led to major decreases in pollution. There have been documented drops in the concentration of the six main pollutants. Most of the country has also overcome the standards of sulfur dioxide, nitrogen, dioxide, and carbon monoxide ("Clean Air Act," 2004). These have had a huge impact on public health, as well as the environment (Holmstead, 2005).

The emissions from 1970 went from 273 million metric tons of yearly emissions to 133 million metric tons in 2005. Over the same time, carbon monoxide dropped by 52%, sulfur dioxide dropped by 49%, and nitrogen oxides dropped by 247% (Holmstead, 2005). The major gases, being ozone and carbon monoxide, have dropped dramatically ("Air Quality Violations," n.d.).



("Air Quality Violations," n.d.).

Air pollution was not seen as an issue until the Clean Air Act was passed in the 1960s. When it finally started to kick in, pollutants dropped dramatically ("Air Quality Violations," n.d.). Also from 1970 to 2005, the United States economy grew by 187%, the miles traveled by vehicle increased by 171%, and the United States energy use grew by 47% (Holmstead, 2005).

Pollution is an ongoing problem faced every day. However, levels of pollution have dropped dramatically since the Clean Air Act was put into place. Before the Clean Air Act, people did not recognize air quality being a problem. It is something that has made a huge impact on how America deals with the pollution. The Clean Air Act has played a huge role in the decreasing pollution levels.

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Senior Project Paper Rubric Paper

# /	(10-9) Advanced	(8-7) Proficient	(6) Basic	(5) Below Basic (0 = missing criteria)	Points	
Title Page and General Page Formatting: -Title page in APA format includes correct information -1-inch margins on all sides -Paper is double-spaced -Pages numbered consecutively and include an abbreviated title	-0-1 errors	-No more than 2 errors or repeated patterns of errors	-3 or more errors or repeated patterns of errors	-Information and formatting requirements ignored or inaccurate	1 9.5	9.5
Abstract: -100 to 150 word summary of content	-Succinct and complete summary	-Completely summarizes content	-Incomplete or disorganized summary or exceeds word limit	-Summary does not reflect content	1 9	9
Policy Identification -Explains key points of the policy	-Engaging, precise explanation of current policy	-Competent explanation of current policy	-Incomplete or superficial explanation of current policy	-Unclear explanation of current policy	1 8	8
History/Background: -Explains why the policy exists -Explains the influence major political parties had on policy creation OR why the issue is non-partisan	-Thorough explanation of key factors of history/background	-Sufficient explanation of key factors of history/background	-Incomplete or superficial explanation of key factors of the history/background	-Little or unclear explanation of key factors of history/background policy	2 8	16
Current Situation: -Explains current policy situation including effects/outcomes -Identifies and analyzes factors that impact the policy -Analyzes and explains data used to support current situation	-Thorough explanation of current policy situation including effects/outcomes -Thorough explanation of changing factors -Thorough data analysis and explanation	-Sufficient explanation of current policy situation including effects/outcomes -Sufficient explanation of changing factors -Sufficient data analysis and explanation	-Insufficient explanation of current policy situation, the effects, and/or outcomes -Explanation of changing factors lacks development -Data analysis and explanation lack development	-Explanation of current policy situation is confusing or missing -Explanation of changing factors is confusing or missing -Data analysis and explanation is confusing or missing	2 9.5	19
Differing Viewpoints: -Explains and analyzes 2 or more viewpoints objectively -Compares and contrasts viewpoints	-Thorough, objective explanation and analysis of viewpoints -Well-developed and well-organized comparison/contrast	-Objective explanation and analysis of viewpoints -Sufficiently developed and organized comparison/contrast	-Explanation and analysis of viewpoints lacks objectivity or is superficial -Comparison/contrast is inconsistent, needing more development, or stronger organization	-Includes only 1 viewpoint -Explanation and analysis is insufficient or confusing -Comparison/contrast is insufficient, confusing or missing	2 9	18
Policy Recommendation: -Explains recommendation supported by valid research -Is politically feasible -Is economically feasible	-Thorough explanation of recommendation logically built upon valid research -Is both politically and economically feasible	-Sufficient explanation of recommendation built upon valid research -Is generally politically and economically feasible	-Insufficient explanation of recommendation built upon research -The political or economic feasibility is weak	-Explanation of recommendation is confusing, missing or built upon invalid research -Not politically or economically feasible	2 9.5	19
Graphic Support: -Contains complete and accurate information to support text -Is legible	-Thorough, clear, accurate integration of text and graphics -Graphic support is legible	-Sufficient integration of text and graphics -Graphic support is legible	-Insufficient integration of text and graphics -Graphic support is legible	-No integration of text and graphic -Graphic support is not legible	1 9.5	9.5
Internal Citation: -Accurate APA internal citation including graphical support Note: Papers with no internal citation cannot be scored.	-Accurate APA citation content/format	-Minimal errors in APA citation content/format	-Multiple errors in APA citation content/format	-Demonstrates little or no understanding of APA citation -Some citations are missing	1 9.5	9.5
Reference Page: -Correct APA formatting -Only sources cited in the paper are listed Note: Papers with no reference page cannot be scored	-Accurate APA format -Matches all internal citations	-Minimal errors in APA format (pattern of error) -Matches all internal citations	-Multiple errors in APA format -Matches some internal citations	-Demonstrates little or no understanding of APA format -Matches few internal citations	1 10	10
Voice and Word Choice	-Voice is consistently professional -Word choice is mature, precise, and appropriate to topic and audience	-Voice is consistently professional -Word choice is appropriate to topic and audience	-Inconsistent professional voice -Some inaccurate or inappropriate word choices	-Little or no professional voice -Multiple word choice errors that interfere with audience comprehension	1 8.5	8.5
Sentence Fluency and Conventions	-Masterful sentence structure and conventions enhance audience comprehension -Few, if any, sentence or convention errors	-Sentence structure and conventions occasionally enhance audience comprehension. -Sentence or convention errors rarely interfere with audience comprehension	-Sentence structure and use of conventions is inconsistent -Errors in sentence fluency and conventions occasionally interfere with audience comprehension	-Sentence structure and use of conventions are ineffective or confusing. -Errors in sentence fluency and conventions interfere with audience comprehension	1 8	8
Total Score					<u>144</u>	<u>160 (90%)</u>

Comments: Interesting to include Indian tribes. Did they help shape the policy? Well-developed arguments. Your time, research, and dedication to this project are evident.