



NEWS FROM

ULSTER COUNTY

County Executive Jen Metzger

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Ulster County Expands Ground-Level Air Quality Monitoring Network in Partnership with Bard College

KINGSTON, NY - Ulster County has partnered with Bard College and its Hudson Valley Community Air Network (HVCAN) to install 17 new ground-level air quality sensors at libraries, town halls, and community centers across the County. These sensors provide residents with real-time information about local air pollution and offer free alerts through [JustAir](#), a platform that notifies users when air quality becomes unhealthy and again when conditions improve.

Ulster County is the first County in New York State to build a community-based, street-level air quality network, laying the groundwork for a true regional system. With Ulster County's expansion, HVCAN now includes 22 sensors across the Hudson Valley, dramatically improving access to hyperlocal air quality data.

These sensors measure fine particulate matter — tiny particles from sources like soot, smoke, and vehicle exhaust that are small enough to be inhaled and cause serious health impacts. Because the sensors are installed roughly six feet off the ground, they capture the air residents actually breathe, which can differ significantly from rooftop or elevated monitors. Residents can sign up for free email or text alerts at www.JustAir.app, and can learn more — including a short instructional video — at www.ulstercountyny.gov/air-quality. No app download is required; users simply enter an email or phone number to receive real-time notifications.

“Poor air quality can harm people’s health, especially older adults, young children, and those with pre-existing health conditions,” **said Ulster County Executive Jen Metzger.** “By building this ground-level network with Bard College and the Hudson Valley Community Air Network, we’re equipping our residents with real-time, accessible information to make informed decisions about their exposure to the air outside. Knowledge is power, and I’m proud that

Ulster County is leading the way in offering the tools our communities need to best protect their health and the health of loved ones.”

“HVCAN demonstrates that science does not belong only in laboratories or universities; it belongs in communities, where people can use knowledge to support healthier futures together,” **said Desirée Lyle, Program Director at Bard College's Center for Environmental Sciences and Humanities.** “The data we create encourages curiosity, dialogue, and shared responsibility for environmental health, while offering a model for how science and community engagement can grow together.”

Led by the Department of the Environment, in support of climate action work, this project would not be possible without the partnership of local libraries and town halls, which serve as trusted community anchors. Their collaboration has been invaluable in building a network that reflects the needs of the whole community.

About HVCAN

Launched in 2025 by Bard College’s Community Sciences Lab, the Hudson Valley Community Air Network is a community-powered outdoor air monitoring project that brings together science, technology, and local partnerships to provide real-time, hyperlocal air quality data across the region. With Ulster County’s participation, HVCAN now forms the backbone of the Hudson Valley’s first regional, ground-level air quality network.

For more information, visit: www.ulstercountyny.gov/air-quality.

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