

Environment & Energy

New York Launches Air Monitoring for Overburdened Communities

By Zach Bright

July 6, 2022, 2:52 PM

- Mobile sensors will track air block by block
 - Largest air monitoring endeavor for state, release says
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Hyperlocal air quality and greenhouse gas monitoring is coming to environmentally burdened New York communities after top state elected officials announced a program launch on Wednesday.

It's the largest air monitoring endeavor New York has undertaken, according to a release from Gov. Kathy Hochul's (D) office.

The effort aims to use vehicles with sensors to measure block-by-block air pollution at a community level multiple times through the year. Data collected will aid decisions to reduce emissions and address health burdens and inequities from air pollution.

"Air monitoring will provide us with data to help drive solutions to reduce greenhouse gases and other air pollutants, and will improve public health in the long-run," Lt. Gov. Antonio Delgado (D) said. "This project will have a significant impact on residents all across New York State, particularly in our black and brown communities which are historically overburdened by pollution."

The project, using \$3 million in state grant funding, is underway in Manhattan, the Bronx, the Capital Region, and Buffalo and Niagara Falls. Monitoring in Rochester, Syracuse, Brooklyn, Queens, Hempstead, and Mount Vernon and Yonkers will begin this fall.

Those communities were selected with input from the state's Climate Justice Working Group, which identified areas with disproportionate burdens of air pollution. The state Department of Environmental Conservation is partnering with community groups and local officials to identify and implement plans using collected data.

The initiative uses mobile mapping technology and analytics from Aclima, an air tracking company. It's partnering with New York-based climate tech startup BlocPower, which will train staff to operate Aclima's mobile environmental sensor network.

Air monitoring would contribute to achieving greenhouse gas emissions reductions in New York's Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act, the governor's release added. The act sets economy-wide emissions reductions of 40% by 2030 and 85% by 2050, compared to 1990 levels.

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