Industrial and commercial operations often emit pollutants into the air. These types of air pollution contributors, called stationary sources, are generally non-mobile, larger emitting sources. Examples include power generating plants, mining sites, petroleum facilities, and chemical plants. Pollutants released from this category include all of the criteria pollutants along with state and federally regulated air toxic pollutants. Pollution is released from a wide variety of processes at stationary sources, but most commonly from operations such as fossil fuel combustion, solvent evaporation, and raw material handling.

Stationary sources can be made up of many different emission points. An emission point is the specific place or piece of equipment from which a pollutant is emitted. Air pollutants are frequently emitted from smokestacks, storage tanks, equipment leaks, process wastewater handling/treatment areas, loading and unloading operations, and process vents. Emissions from all the emission points at a stationary source are summed up and used to classify the source as a major or minor source. A major source is one that emits, or has the potential to emit, pollutants over a major source threshold. A minor source is any source which emits fewer pollutants than the major source threshold.

Stationary sources are subject to various federal, state, and county regulations for the purpose of minimizing pollution and its impact on our environment. Many of these regulations were developed as a result of the federal Clean Air Act of 1970 and amendments made to the Act in 1990. Mecklenburg County Air Quality (“MCAQ”) has been delegated the authority to implement these requirements locally.

MCAQ issues air quality permits, conducts inspections, and reviews emission reports for air pollution sources in the county. Currently, there are approximately 235 permitted stationary sources in our database, representing a wide range of industry types. Of these permitted sites, nine (9) are considered major sources and the remaining are minor source types. The most common permitted industries as identified by the North American Industrial Classification System (NAICS) are:

- Ready-mix Concrete Manufacturing – 15 sites
- Asphalt Paving and Block Manufacturing – 10 sites
- Petroleum Bulk Stations and Terminals – 9 sites
- Commercial Lithographic Printing – 6 sites
- Fabricated Metal Product Manufacturing – 6 sites
- General Medical and Surgical Hospitals – 6 sites
- Stone Mining and Quarrying – 6 sites

More information

- [EPA - Summary of the Clear Air Act](http://www.epa.gov)
- [Mecklenburg County Air Quality Home Page](http://airquality.charmeck.org)
- [Mecklenburg County Air Pollution Facility Information](http://airquality.charmeck.org)