

Monitoring for dust events

Rural Air Quality Monitoring Network and DustWatch



How do we monitor for dust?

Ongoing intense drought brings with it an increased likelihood of major dust storms. These affect the health of NSW communities, and pose significant challenges for natural resource management.

The Rural Air Quality Monitoring Network (RAQMN) is part of Australia's largest air quality monitoring network, and provides reliable exposure assessment by measuring airborne particle concentrations.

Real time data from 35 volunteer-operated sites across NSW are made available online through the RAQMN. The data contributes to DustWatch, the leading source of general and scientific information about wind erosion, dust, groundcover and smoke across Australia.

How does the data help?

The RAQMN and DustWatch have provided a better understanding of the causes of dust storms.

The RAQMN has six sites located in dust-source areas outside of NSW to provide early warning of when dust events are moving into NSW. Monthly DustWatch reports are made available online.

During a dust storm, the RAQMN provides real-time information and gives an early warning of dust to government agencies and the community.

For more information, search for either 'Rural Air Quality Monitoring Network' or 'DustWatch'.

Top photo: Dust storm in NSW, Dustwatch/DPIE.
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