




STATE OF CONNECTICUT
COUNCIL ON ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

Environmental Quality in Connecticut

A Summary Review of 2009

Below, the Council presents a very brief summary of environmental trends and conditions for 2009. The full report, available at www.ct.gov/ceq/AnnualReport, shows long-term trends for 30 indicators and gives complete information on how progress is measured.

April 29, 2010

		Trends in Brief
Our Air	<p>Levels of every air pollutant improved in 2009.</p> <p>Connecticut had 358 Good Air Days in 2009 (compared to only 338 in 2008 and 320 in 2007), a modern record.</p>	
Our Land	<p>Preserved Land The Council determined in 2009 that nobody knows how many acres are permanently preserved in Connecticut. The state made minimal progress toward its own goal of preserving 10 percent of the land area.</p> <p>Farmland Farmland loss outpaced preservation. Connecticut has been losing about 1,800 acres of farm fields per year. In 2009, the state preserved about 1300 acres, a 100% improvement over 2008.</p> <p>Wetlands Connecticut saw more acres of inland wetlands disturbed in 2008 and 2009 than in 2007, the first back-to-back increase in a decade.</p>	
Our Beaches	<p>More coastal beaches were closed to swimming in 2009, due in large part to heavy rains that washed pollutants into the water...</p> <p>...but more beaches had piping plovers, small shorebirds that nested on 16 coastal beaches from Westport to Groton, the most in decades. The piping plover is a threatened species.</p> 	
Our Sound	<p>The past year saw a small downturn in lobsters and approved shellfish beds. Other Long Island Sound trends stayed the same or declined. The area of low oxygen spread in 2009 for the fifth consecutive year.</p>	
Our Rivers & Reservoirs	<p>About 80 miles of rivers receive sewage overflows during storms, a problem that will take many more years to correct. More than 80% of river miles cannot be classified as always suitable for swimming.</p> <p>As usual, more than 99% of water delivered by water utilities met all drinking water standards in 2009.</p>	
Our Health: Cancers	<p>The incidence of breast cancer and non-Hodgkin's lymphoma went up slightly but remained well below their peak levels of the late 1990s. Incidence of these cancers varies greatly from state to state, and Connecticut has rates that are higher than average (for breast cancer, the highest).</p>	
Our Future	<p>The average resident drove his or her car less and used electricity more efficiently... ..but bought a greater proportion of appliances that were not <i>EnergyStar</i> efficient.</p> <p>Compliance with environmental laws fell below 90% for the first time in four years.</p>	

Personal Impact indicators measure human actions that affect the quality of tomorrow's environment.