

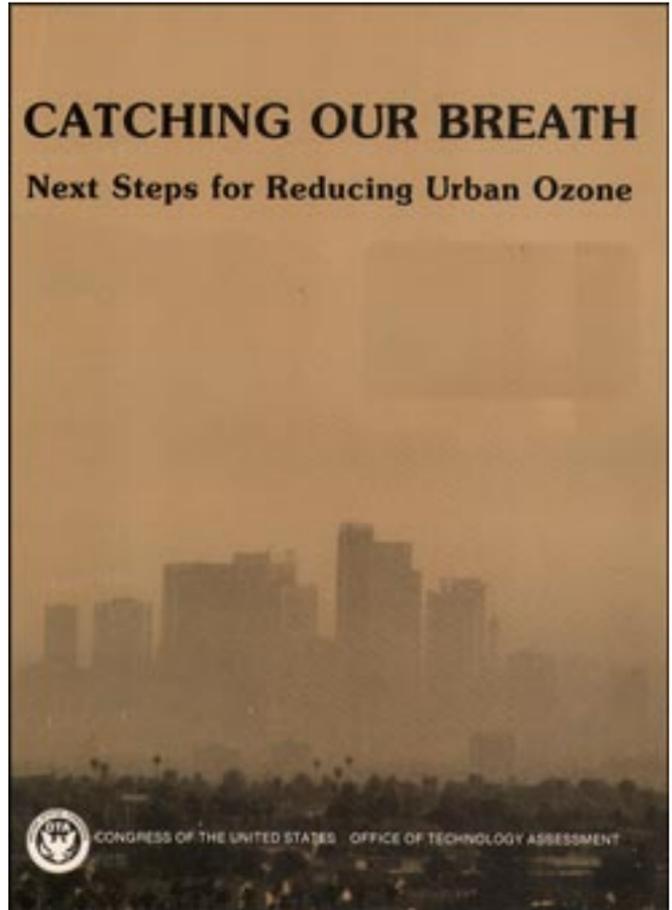
*Catching Our Breath: Next Steps for
Reducing Urban Ozone*

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Foreword

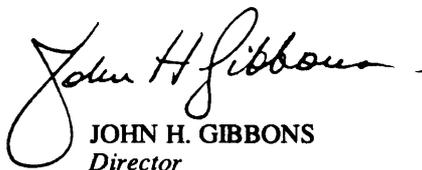
More than a decade has passed since the last major set of amendments to the Clean Air Act. Deadlines for meeting the health-based air quality standard for ozone, the major component of urban smog, have come and gone. While some progress has been made, most metropolitan areas still do not meet the air quality goals first set by Congress in 1970.

This report on urban ozone was requested by the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works, the House Committee on Energy and Commerce, and its Subcommittee on Health and the Environment in anticipation of the upcoming reauthorization of the Clean Air Act. Of the air pollutants that the Act covers, ozone has been the most difficult to bring under control; it may well be the most expensive.

One of the key findings of our study is that, once again, we cannot achieve the ozone standard in all areas with currently available technology. We can make considerable progress-about two-thirds of the reductions needed, enough to bring about half of the cities into compliance with the standard-but we cannot get all the way there.

We thus conclude that an effective ozone control strategy must include measures to achieve *both* near-term emissions reductions using today's control methods and, just as important, measures to ensure that we can continue to make progress post-2000, when many areas will still exceed the standard. Our report presents options in both categories.

Substantial assistance was received from many organizations and individuals during the course of this study. We would like to express our thanks to our advisory panel, contractors, workshop participants, and the many reviewers who provided advice and information throughout the course of this assessment. Special thanks goes to the many individuals at the Environmental Protection Agency who answered our numerous requests for data, models, and technical assistance. OTA, however, remains solely responsible for the contents of this report.



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NOTE: OTA appreciates and is grateful for the valuable assistance and thoughtful critiques provided by the advisory panel members. The panel does not, however, necessarily approve, disapprove, or endorse this report. OTA assumes full responsibility for the report and the accuracy of its contents.

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