

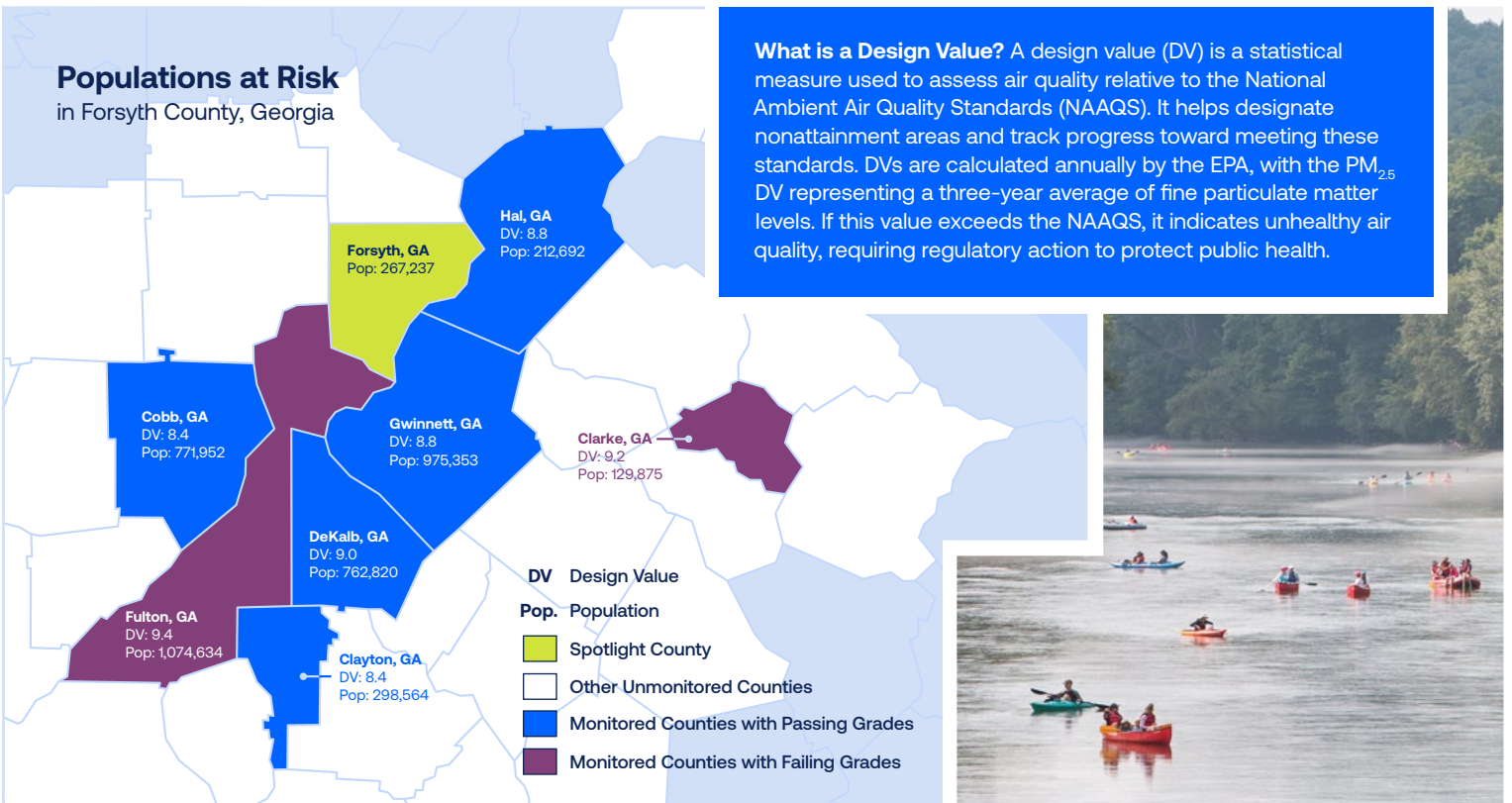
# Something in the Air

## Forsyth County, Georgia



The American Lung Association’s “State of the Air” 2024 found that 39% of people in the U.S.—131.2 million people—live in places with unhealthy levels of ozone or particle pollution. The report relies on data collected at official air quality monitoring sites, which are limited in scope, leaving many counties without a grade for deadly particle pollution.

This new, supplemental report taps into the power of satellite-derived data to spotlight potentially unhealthy levels of air pollution air quality in hundreds of counties without official monitors, including Forsyth County, Georgia as one example.



Forsyth County is part of the rapidly growing Atlanta metropolitan area, home to over seven million people. With over a quarter million residents, Forsyth County is one of Georgia's fastest-growing counties, attracting new residents due to its economic opportunities and proximity to Atlanta.

This rapid development has increased local emissions from construction, traffic, and residential energy use, adding to the pollution burden. Forsyth County's proximity to the Atlanta metropolitan area makes it particularly vulnerable to air pollution. Many Forsyth County residents commute throughout the area for work and leisure, with major highways running through the region, limited public transit, and heavy traffic.



Air quality in the Atlanta metro area is tied for 48th worst for annual particle pollution out of 204 metropolitan areas in the U.S. in "State of the Air" 2024. Two counties in the region received failing grade—Fulton County, (DV of  $9.4 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ ), and Clark County (DV of  $9.2 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ ). The other five neighboring counties with monitors all had DVs above  $8 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ , offering some insight into potential pollution levels in Forsyth County.

Forsyth County is home to thousands of residents who are at increased risk of health harm from exposure to unhealthy levels of air pollution, including more than 100,000 vulnerable children and seniors. Over 36% of the population are people of color, who often face disproportionate risk of environmental exposures that threaten health.

Forsyth County ranks among the healthiest counties in Georgia, and well above the national average across a range of health metrics. Exposure to particle pollution is not one of them, however, and its most vulnerable residents often remain potentially underinformed about potential health risks from elevated  $\text{PM}_{2.5}$ , and without the information they need to advocate for cleaner air.

To learn more about the American Lung Association's work using emerging technology to understand local air quality, visit, [Lung.org/something-in-the-air](https://www.lung.org/something-in-the-air).