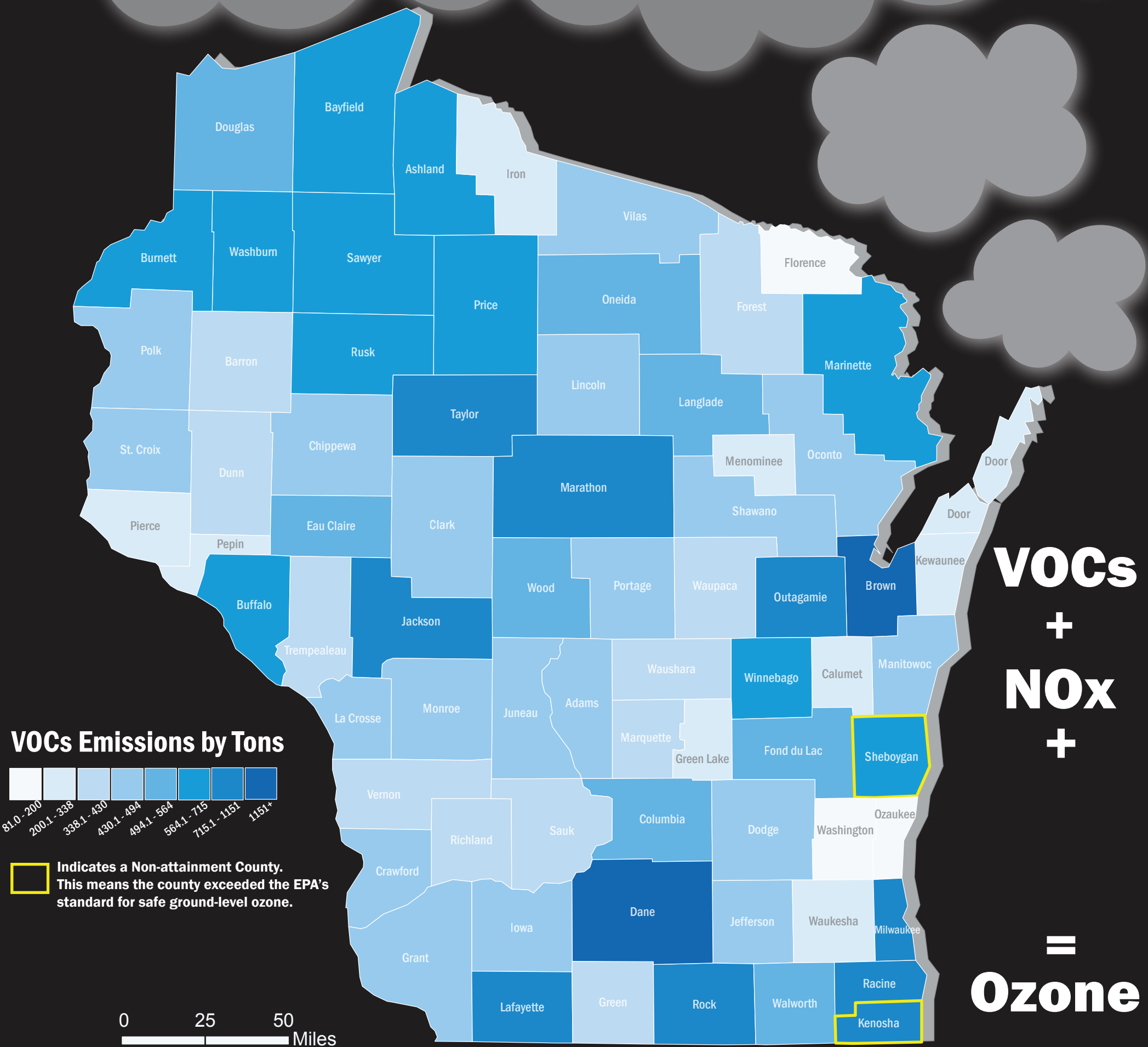


Air Pollution in Wisconsin

A 2011 Measurement of Volatile Organic Compounds Emissions by County



What Are Volatile Organic Compounds?

Volatile Organic Compounds are gases that are emitted from certain solids and liquids. They have a high vapor pressure at ordinary room temperature. VOCs come from a variety of products and chemicals. They negatively affect indoor air quality. When outdoors, VOCs can react with nitrous oxides and create ground-level ozone if sunlight is present. These measures of VOCs above are taken from a 2011 data set from the EPA. The totals are of annual fuel combustion from industry and electric utility by county.

What Are the Negative Health Effects of Ozone?

Ground-level ozone, also known as "bad ozone", is not directly emitted into the air, but forms when conditions are right. Inhaling ozone can be harmful and typically, levels become unsafe on hot, sunny days. Children are at greatest risk of exposure because their lungs are still developing and they are more likely to be outside and active during events of high ozone levels. The elderly and people with respiratory issues are also at risk of having adverse health on high ozone days. Ozone can make it more difficult from one to breathe, cause shortness of breath, pain when inhaling, and aggravate lung diseases such as asthma, emphysema, and chronic bronchitis.

How Can You Minimize Your Personal VOCs Emissions?

The EPA has listed these household products as sources of VOCs:

- Paints, paint strippers
- Wood preservatives
- Aerosol sprays
- Cleansers, disinfectants
- Air Fresheners
- Automotive products
- Pesticides

Industries where these products are manufactured, emit VOCs on a much larger scale.