



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Olympic Lung Health

American Lung Association of New England is the expert on lung health.

Besides the thrill of victory and the agony of defeat, the big story at the upcoming Olympics games is air quality. You can get the air quality where you live, and in Beijing where our athletes are competing, by visiting OwnYourAir.org.

The catch is that the air quality reports for Beijing are issued by the Chinese government which may be using standards that do not adequately protect public health. Here in the U.S., there is an air quality standards dilemma as well. The new standards set by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency are not as strict as health organizations such as the American Lung Association, and even EPA's own scientists, believe they should be. According to EPA's own Clean Air Scientific Advisory Committee, these standards do not adequately protect public health.

Just as in Beijing, the U.S. air quality index may say the air is healthy, but it is not. For example, last year, New England recorded 54 days of high ozone levels according to EPA standards. If the recommended stricter standards had been in place, a staggering 98 days would have qualified as unhealthy.

The OwnYourAir.org website was launched by the American Lung Association of New England as a resource for providing air quality information. We now know that exposure to bad air for even short periods of time can have harmful effects on the lungs. It has been likened to a sunburn of the lungs. Bad air rubs lung tissue much like sandpaper.

Bad air knows no governmental boundaries. It is a global problem. From the U.S. to China and all the air in between, everyone should have the right to breathe healthy air. For more information on air quality, call the American Lung Association of New England at 1-800-LUNG USA or visit OwnYourAir.org.

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