

CCA contacted local and state candidates with questions about air quality issues, making every effort to include all candidates, regardless of party affiliation.

Thank you to those who participated! Following is a sampling of their responses. To read each candidate's responses in full, go to <https://bit.ly/3n18v2C>

Candidates Answer Questions on Air Quality

County Commissioner Candidates

CCA: What should Mesa County do to protect our air quality and prevent Front Range levels of pollution on the Western Slope?



District 1:

Kathryn Bedell: The Western Slope is a different airmass than the front range and most of the mountain towns. When I check the air monitoring numbers it seems all the way to Gypsum has similar air quality to the Denver/Boulder area. Our air quality seems to only get poor

during wildfire or inversions. So, the most economically sensible thing is to encourage changed behavior during these periods of time. Ask citizens to limit driving, wood burning and agricultural burns.

Cody Davis: The development of clean technology and more efficient uses of energy sources is the path to cleaner air. As technology increases, society can manage by-products of natural resources and mitigate the risks they impose. I see a brighter and cleaner energy future by utilizing multiple forms of energy; solar, wind, oil, natural gas, hydroelectric, and nuclear. The approach must be market-driven, or energy will inevitably become unaffordable and limited.



District 3



Janet Rowland: The first step in solving any problem is to clearly identify the problem, both the source and extent of it.

With regard to the source, there are a variety of things that affect our air quality in Mesa County, such as dust from traffic on unpaved roads, smoke, soot and ash from fires and automobile exhaust. However, the mere existence of those issues does not automatically mean we have an air-quality problem.

Data from air-quality monitoring is the best way to determine the extent of the problem. The Purple Air air quality monitoring project, launched by the Citizens of Clean Air, is an excellent tool. Whitewater is an area Citizens for Clean Air have raised concerns about, yet there is no monitor in the area. We could install a monitor on county property either at the Landfill, Road and Bridge Office, or Animal Services.

Looking at the Purple Air map over time, with the exception of recent forest fires, most of the monitoring sites have been at or below 50 AQI. The health department also reports that outside of forest fires, the air quality in Mesa County is relatively good, and consistently remains below an average 50 AQI.

While it appears we are in good shape with respect to air quality in Mesa County at this time, we should continue to monitor it closely, and if we see our AQI rise significantly for extended periods of time, it will be important to then identify the source of that problem and address it. My preference

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Commissioner Candidate Rowland, continued:

for solving problems is through community partnerships. I would bring together stakeholders from the public, private and non-profits groups to identify balanced solutions that work for all stakeholders.

District 3

Dave Edwards: I support Governor Polis' initiatives to make Colorado carbon-free.

Additional questions and candidate responses at <https://bit.ly/3nI8v2C>



State House Candidates



CCA: What should Colorado do to protect our air quality and prevent Front Range levels of pollution on the Western Slope?

Dist. 55: Scott Beilfuss: With the Trump administration rolling back so many critical EPA rule rollbacks it is only a matter of time before we become hit by elevated pollution from mining, drilling and car emissions. Colorado must continue

to work toward keeping carbon, methane, and other emissions down to protect our declining climate problems.

We are getting hit so hard this summer with smoke from the fires in surrounding areas which really put a burden on people with breathing problems. Combine that with dust from the desert and higher traffic density during non COVID times and the air quality outlook is not good. Colorado must stand strong and be aggressive on cutting traffic, adding more public transportation, and encouraging EV's and green power growth in our cities.

I have advocated locally for more public transportation and better bike lanes and commuting paths to be included in future plans. We need to encourage bike traffic and discourage cars. I will report to you that the City of GJ needs a lot of pressure to look differently at building density and bike lanes – right now they are planning for extra lanes (up to five lanes on Hwy 340 in the Redlands!) and have few plans for additional public transportation.

Additional questions and the candidate responses at <https://bit.ly/3nI8v2C>

CCA did not receive responses from incumbent HD55 candidate, Janice Rich; incumbent HD54 candidates, Matt Soper or MarieAlice Slaven-Emond; nor alternative party candidates.



The Pine Gulch fire burned throughout the month of August, with harmful smoke lingering outdoors and indoors. Advisories to stay inside and close windows was impractical in the 100+ degree temperatures as residents realized evaporative or “swamp” coolers simply sucked in and circulated outdoor smoke.

CCA members watched our indoor PurpleAir monitor particulate counts and experimented with fans, filters, air purifiers and air conditioners to find the best resources for protecting our indoor air from smoke. We went online and discovered some interesting products, too. Then came up with some short-term and long-term tips to help others figure out the best ways to keep the indoors as smoke free as possible. You can check it out on our website at <https://bit.ly/2GQCPaL>