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32% rise in vehicles driven without PUC

Swathyr Iyer | TNN | Updated: Feb 27, 2018, 11:18 IST

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HYDERABAD: The number of vehicle owners penalized for causing pollution or driving without mandatory Pollution Under Control certificate in 2017 was 32% higher than those penalized the previous year.

Hyderabad traffic police booked 32,935 vehicles for causing visible pollution or being driven without a valid PUC certificate in 2016, the number jumped to 43,375 by the end of 2017. Over the past three years, 1,44,435 such cases have been booked, reveals pollution data.

Air pollution levels recorded across the city stand well above the permissible limits for the month of February. The particulate matter (PM) 10 content and the level of other pollutants in the air such as sulphur dioxide (SO₂) and oxides of nitrogen (Nox) has also gone up this month, shows data recorded by Telangana State Pollution Control Board (TSPCB).

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Pollution control board officials said vehicular pollution was the chief reason for the city's air turning toxic. "More than 50% of air pollution is caused by vehicular emissions. Number of vehicles hitting the roads is going up every year. Few measures such as elimination of leaded petrol and sulphur content in fuels has helped bring down air pollution levels marginally," said P Veeranna, senior scientist with TSPCB.

Veeranna said three-wheelers contributed majorly to the air pollution. "Three-wheelers often use adulterated fuel or kerosene as alternative for diesel. To evade pollution testing vehicles, many autos ply on inner and interior roads," he said.