

Ozone hole in Antarctic sets new records

U.S. scientists have reported that this year's Antarctic ozone hole is the biggest ever. The ozone layer, which protects life on Earth by blocking the sun's harmful ultraviolet rays, has been severely depleted by human-produced gases such as chlorine and bromine in the upper atmosphere

OZONE HOLE: September 21-30

▶ **Largest average area:** 27.4 million km²
(bigger than North America)

▶ **Lowest depth of ozone:** 85 Dobson Units* (down from 300 in July)

▶ **Annual record since 1979**

Year	Average ozone hole area (million km ²)
1979	0
1980	0.5
1981	1.0
1982	2.0
1983	3.0
1984	4.0
1985	5.0
1986	6.0
1987	7.0
1988	8.0
1989	9.0
1990	10.0
1991	11.0
1992	12.0
1993	13.0
1994	14.0
1995	No data
1996	15.0
1997	16.0
1998	17.0
1999	18.0
2000	19.0
2001	20.0
2002	21.0
2003	22.0
2004	23.0
2005	24.0
2006	26.0

2006

26

Average ozone hole area
(million km²)

1979: 0 No data for 1995. 2006 figure is preliminary

Antarctica

Source: NASA *Measure of ozone amounts above fixed point in atmosphere © GRAPHIC NEWS