

A!ert

dvrpc | November 2013

Alert is a monthly update on transportation and air quality planning activities in the Delaware Valley.



Air Quality Regulations

State Recommendations for 2012 PM_{2.5} Nonattainment Area Designations Expected in December 2013.

In December 2012, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) tightened the annual fine particle pollution (PM_{2.5}). National Ambient Air Quality Standard (NAAQS) from 15 micrograms per cubic meter of air ($\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$) to 12 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$, while retaining the 24 hour PM_{2.5} standard at 35 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$.

One year after the revision of the NAAQS, the states are required to submit recommendations of the counties that should be included in the nonattainment areas for the new standard. Nonattainment areas are those areas that are either not meeting the revised standard or contribute to the nonattainment of other counties. EPA guidance instructs the states to consider nine criteria when recommending nonattainment area designations. These criteria include air quality monitoring data to identify counties that are not meeting the new NAAQS and also include considerations such as commuting patterns, population growth rates, meteorological and geographic factors, as well as existing jurisdictional boundaries that may influence how a county contributes to the air quality issues of nearby counties. When reviewing air quality monitoring data, the states and EPA look at the three year average of an air quality monitor's annual average PM_{2.5} concentrations to identify a "design value". If the design value is below 12 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ that county is meeting the 2012 Annual PM_{2.5} NAAQS.

With the exception of Chester and Delaware Counties in Pennsylvania, PM_{2.5} monitoring data from 2009-2011 indicate that the design values for the counties in the DVRPC planning area are below 12 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$. This data points to a likely nonattainment area designation for southeastern Pennsylvania for the 2012 PM_{2.5} NAAQS. The EPA will review the state recommended nonattainment area designations and make final designations in December 2014.

The DVRPC region was determined to meet the 1997 and 2006 PM_{2.5} NAAQS earlier in 2013.

For more information on the 2012 PM_{2.5}, NAAQS and nonattainment area designation process please visit:

<http://epa.gov/airquality/particlepollution/designations/index.htm>.



Save the Date

**Monday,
November 18, 2013
Air Quality Partnership
Board Meeting
10:00 am – 12:00 pm**

*Location of Meeting:
DVRPC New Jersey Room
8th Floor
6th and Race Streets
Philadelphia, PA*

**Monday,
December 16, 2013
Philadelphia Diesel
Difference Working Group
10:00 am**

*Location of Meeting:
DVRPC Conference Center
8th Floor
6th and Race Streets
Philadelphia, PA*



Health and Air Quality

World Health Organization Adds Outdoor Air Pollution to List of Carcinogens

In October 2013, the World Health Organization (WHO) added outdoor air pollution to its list of “Group 1” carcinogens, meaning that sufficient evidence exists that the pollutants cause cancer in humans. This action by the WHO groups ambient air pollution with other carcinogens such as asbestos, tobacco smoke, and ultraviolet radiation as factors that cause cancer. The organization made a point to state that these pollutants not only cause lung cancer but have been implicated in other forms of the disease such as bladder cancer.

“We can’t treat ourselves out of this cancer problem”, stated Chris Wild of the International Agency for the Research on Cancer. Dr. Wild went on to state that cleaning up the air will be the best way to reduce cancer rates worldwide.

While acknowledging that people in developing nations with large populations and booming manufacturing sectors are particularly at risk, the WHO stated that risks from pollution from transportation, power generation, and industrial and agricultural emissions apply to all regions of the globe.

For more information on the cancer risks from ambient air pollution, please visit:

www.reuters.com/article/2013/10/17/us-cancer-pollution-idUSBRE99G0BB20131017



Air Quality Information

United Nations Group Proposes to Develop Global Airline Emissions Rules

On September 30, 2013, the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), a specialized agency of the United Nations, announced a preliminary agreement to develop rules to limit greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from airlines beginning in 2016. The rules, if agreed upon, would take effect in the early 2020s. The rules would create industry-wide standards for limiting carbon emissions.

While the rule would be a significant step towards addressing GHG emissions from airplanes, it would likely be a step back for regulations enacted by the European Union which required flights that used European airports for any leg of their journey to account for emissions from the entire flight, including buying carbon permits and paying fees for those emissions. The European rules, enacted in 2008, have been challenged by the international community and likely would not be included in the agreement to address airline carbon emissions proposed by the ICAO.

Airlines account for approximately 2% of the world’s carbon dioxide emissions and critics of the ICAO proposal claim that the physics of flying make reducing GHG emissions a political and technical challenge since improving fuel efficiency of airplanes would require reducing weight on the flights or implementing as yet unproven improvements to the engineering of airplanes. Other options to reduce GHG emissions from airlines include dampening demand or fundamentally changing the airlines business model to improve efficiency; neither of which are popular options with the airline industry.

For more information on airline emission rules, please visit:

www.nytimes.com/2013/10/05/business/international/un-group-moves-to-develop-global-airline-emission-rules.html?



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