

Alert

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



Air Quality Regulations

US EPA Announces Nonattainment Designations for the 2012 Annual PM_{2.5} Standard

On December 18, 2014, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) issued final area designations for the 2012 annual national air quality standard for fine particulate matter (PM_{2.5}). EPA strengthened the annual fine particle standard to 12 micrograms per cubic meter (µg/m³) from 15 µg/m³ in 2012 and designated 14 areas in six states as nonattainment areas. These areas include counties with monitors measuring a violation of the standard, as well as nearby counties that contribute to the violation by emitting fine particle pollution, or pollutants that form it (PM_{2.5} precursors). The designations will take effect in March 2015, 90–days after the notice is published in the *Federal Register*.

The 2012 Annual PM_{2.5} standard is based on the advice of the EPA's Scientific Advisory Committee and the review of thousands of health studies. Evidence from the health studies indicate that fine particle pollution poses a threat to public health at lower levels than were previously thought. Fine particle pollution is composed of microscopic bits of liquids, solids, and sometimes carcinogenic materials that can penetrate deep into the lungs and even the blood stream. PM_{2.5} pollution has been shown to aggravate respiratory disease, cardiac disease, and even cause premature death.

All of the counties in the DVRPC region have been found to meet the previous PM_{2.5} standards in 2012. The EPA redesignated the DVRPC New Jersey counties from nonattainment to maintenance areas in 2013 for the 1997 and 2006 standards. The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection is currently in the process of submitting maintenance plans (plans to demonstrate how the area will continue to meet the standards into the future) for the PM_{2.5} standards to the EPA.

Delaware County is the only county in the DVRPC region to be identified by the EPA as not meeting the 2012 PM_{2.5} standard. Delaware County will constitute a one-county nonattainment area within the DVRPC region. According to the monitoring data used to determine the nonattainment area designations, PM_{2.5} concentrations have been falling in the entire DVRPC region over the past decade and Delaware County is expected to meet the new standard by the federally mandated attainment date of December 2020.

Northampton and Lehigh counties, as well as Allegheny, Cambria, Indiana, and Lebanon counties, in Pennsylvania, were also designated as a nonattainment for the 2012 PM_{2.5} standard. No counties in New Jersey were designated as nonattainment in the most recent EPA action.



Save the Date

Friday,
January 9, 2015

**DVRPC 2015 Competitive
CMAQ Program
for New Jersey
Application Period Opens**

For More Information Visit:
www.dvrpc.org/CMAQ

Wednesday,
January 28, 2015
4:00 PM

**Mandatory Information
Session for Applicants**

*DVRPC 2015 Competitive
CMAQ Program*

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

The EPA indicated that 99 percent of counties that are identified as not meeting the 2012 standard in 2014 should meet the standard by 2020 by implementing clean air regulations that are currently on the books or scheduled for implementation.

For more information and interactive maps demonstrating the nonattainment designations of EPA's 2012 Annual PM_{2.5} standards, please visit:

www.epa.gov/airquality/particlepollution/designations/2012standards/regs.htm



Information

DVRPC Opens Competitive Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Funding Program for New Jersey

On January 9, 2015, DVRPC will open a competitive Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) Program funding round for Burlington, Camden, Gloucester, and Mercer counties in New Jersey. The goal of the CMAQ program is to improve air quality and/or reduce congestion in air quality nonattainment or maintenance areas. DVRPC periodically holds competitive CMAQ funding rounds to support local projects that promote the program's goals.

This competitive funding program will make \$3.6 million available to be distributed over Fiscal Years 2016 through 2019. Examples of eligible CMAQ projects include pedestrian and bicycle projects, transit improvement programs, congestion reduction and traffic flow improvements, diesel retrofit and repower projects, and funding of transportation demand management programs, among others. Public agencies and private-public partnerships with a public agency sponsor are eligible to apply for the competitive CMAQ program funds.

DVRPC funded five projects for \$2.7 million in the 2012 Competitive CMAQ funding round in New Jersey.

The CMAQ program application forms and program guidance are available at www.dvrpc.org/cmaq. The application period will remain open from January 9, 2013 until 5 p.m. on April 9, 2015. A mandatory informational meeting for potential applicants will be held at the DVRPC offices on Wednesday, January 28, 2015 at the DVRPC offices. Information on projects previously funded by the DVRPC CMAQ program is available on that website.

For more information, please visit www.dvrpc.org/cmaq or contact Sean Greene at sgreene@dvrpc.org.

Pennsylvania DEP Will Open Clean Diesel Grant Program in January 2015

The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) will open the PA State Clean Diesel Grant Program (FY2014) in January, 2015. DEP will make \$106,000 available for projects that reduce emissions from on-road, heavy and medium duty diesel engines as well as some off-road construction equipment. DEP anticipates that the funding announcement will be published in the *Pennsylvania Bulletin*, in early 2015.

For more information, on the PA State Clean Diesel Grant program, please visit

www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/Bureau_of_Air_Quality/14528



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