

**Agenda for the Meeting of the
Air Improvement Resources Executive / Advisory Committees
Wednesday, January 23, 2002 9:00 a.m.
Alamo Area Council of Governments
8626 Tesoro Drive, Suite 100, San Antonio**

Agenda

- I. Roll Call
- II. Citizens to be Heard
- III. Approval of Minutes
- IV. AIR Public Education Report
 - A. Media Air Quality Packages
 - B. Ozone Season Kickoff Event Update
 - C. Remote Sensing Events Update
 - D. Upcoming Events
- V. O3Flex Plan Report
 - A. Review of Current Status, Goals and Timeline
 - B. Chamber of Commerce Initiative
Action Requested: Approval of Chamber of Commerce Initiative
- VI. Technical Reports
 - A. Emissions Estimates for Proposed Tessman Road LFG Power Station
 - B. Status of Joint Photochemical Modeling Episode
 - C. Moving CAMS 58 and Placing Sulfur Dioxide Monitor at CAMS 23
Action Requested: Approval of Letter to TNRCC re: SO2 Monitor
 - D. Ozone Monitor Placement
Action Requested: Approval of AIR Tech Recommendations and Letter to TNRCC re: Monitoring Requests
- VII. Other Issues
 - A. Off-Road Equipment Subcommittee Report
 - B. Informational Items
 - Federal, State and Local News Issues
- VIII. Adjourn

**The Minutes of the
Air Improvement Resources Executive/Advisory Committee Meeting
Alamo Area Council of Governments
Omni Hotel
Wednesday, December 5, 2001, 9:00**

Executive Members Present

Mayor Patrick Heath, Chair, City of Boerne
Commissioner Jay Millikin, Vice-Chair Comal Co.
Councilwoman Bonnie Conner
Councilman Gene Uptain, Greater Bexar CCC
Judge Marvin Quinney, Wilson Co.
Kathy Contreras, City of Seguin
Judge James Sagebiel, Guadalupe Co.

Advisory Members Present

Raegan Wagner for Bill Fry, HEB
Commissioner John Kight, Kendall Co.
Chris Treutler, USAA
Bill England, Neighborhood Assoc.
Rebecca Gray, American Lung Assoc.
David Splittek, Lackland ISD
Lance Freeman for David Frost, VIA
David Splittek, Lackland ISD
Ken Bercaw, New Braunfels Chamber
Councilman Enrique Barrera, COSA
Dan Felix for Mark Brown, Zachary Co

Guests Present

Scott Ericksen, MPO
Jeanne Geiger, MPO
David Bernal, MPO
Renee Green, Bexar Co.
Susan Stuver, COSA
David Martinez, VIA
David Newman, COSA
Dan Felix, Zachry Construction
Scott Ericksen, MPO
Kate Williams TNRCC
John Bendele, TxDot
Kate Williams, TNRCC
Reagan Wagner, HEB
Stanley A. Dabney II, Alamo Cement Co.
Walter Ague, COSA Council District 8
Jeremy Cooper, Amazing Grace Garage
Hector Martinez, SAWS
Charissa Barnes, Official Inspection Station

Staff Present

Al Notzon, AACOG Exec. Dir.
Dean Danos, Deputy Dir.
Peter Bella
Steven Smeltzer
Chris Langston
Brenda Williams
Berti Vaughan

I. Roll Call

Roll call was conducted by Dean Danos. Subsequently, Mayor Heath called the meeting to order.

II. Citizens to be Heard

Mayor Heath asked if there were any citizens to be heard on subjects germane to the meeting. Jeremy Cooper with Amazing Grace Garage asked to be heard. Mr. Cooper reported to the committee that the previous month, Representative Chisum's office advised him (Mr. Cooper) that his legal interpretation of House Bill 2134 and funding of voluntary LIRAP programs was in line with their interpretation. He was passing on that information to the committee.

III. Minutes

Mayor Heath asked the committee to review the minutes. Commissioner Millikin asked that a few administrative corrections be made to the minutes and motioned for the approval of the minutes with corrections. Bill England seconded the motion. The minutes were approved.

IV.A. Ozone and Particulate Matter Report

Chairman Heath suggested to the committee that item IV.b., Analysis of Ozone Data at Marshall High School (CAMS 23), be moved and considered with item VI.c later on the agenda. Hearing no objections, Chairman Heath asked AACOG Natural Resources staff member Peter Bella to make his report on item IV.a., Ozone and Particulate Matter Report for the End of 2001.

Mr. Bella asked the committee to refer to the end of the year report they received in their mailout. He explained that the report reflected no change on the 1999-2001 three-year ozone average period. This report indicated the region shows attainment values of 82 parts per billion. CAMS 23 at Marshall High School showed improvement during the three-year period since the 1997 promulgation of eight-hour ozone national air quality standards. However, he continued, both the 82 parts per billion average as compared with the threshold value of 85 parts per billion should be taken as a warning sign. The 1999-2001 average of 82 ppb is very close to the 85 ppb threshold value.

On November 19th, the Air Tech Committee heard a report from TNRCC that the monitor at Marshall High School had been reading lower than it should for some period of months. This was discovered by TNRCC Staff by comparing the Marshall High School monitor ozone records with those of the Camp Bullis monitor. These two monitor historically track ozone values that are very close together. In making the comparison, TNRCC provided the Technical Committee with a table showing the Marshall High School monitor values next to the Camp Bullis values; the Camp Bullis values were consistently higher. This was the tip off to TNRCC staff that the Marshall High School monitor was not recording values correctly. On July 17th, TNRCC repaired and replaced the Marshall High School monitor.

Mr. Bella explained that no one knows what values would have been collected had the monitor been functioning correctly throughout the season. Mr. Bella asked that the committee take time to review the letter written to Chairman Huston which they would be commenting on later. On particulate matter readings, Mr. Bella reported the readings continued to be well below federal standards.

V. Air Public Education Report

In Dorothy Birch's absence, Hector Martinez, an employee of the San Antonio Water System - Environmental Services Department, and a member of the Public Education Committee, presented the report. Using a slide presentation/briefing, Mr. Martinez reported on the contents of the public information packet for the committee's consideration. This included updates on increasing air quality media coverage, remote sensing events, Ozone Season 2002 Kickoff event, state air quality outreach developments, and national air quality outreach developments.

The public information packet included two separate documents: San Antonio Ozone Pollution Status and Communicating Air Quality to the Public, which are to be sent to the

newspaper, television and radio media. Before proceeding, Mr. Martinez explained some changes made to the cover letter for the media packets.

Commissioner Millikin asked if they could improve the visibility of the Air Quality Index logo in the San Antonio paper by asking that it be moved from the back page to the front page. Mr. Bella replied that with the approval of the materials presented, the committee could move ahead with plans to present the information to the media that would hopefully result in greater visibility.

Mayor Heath asked Mr. Bella if the Air Quality Index measured concentrations of volatile organic compounds and nitrogen oxides. Mr. Bella answered no.

Mr. Martinez continued the report by describing the 2002 Ozone Season Kickoff event scheduled for March 30th. Bill England asked about the location of the event. Mr. Martinez said that CPS would be unable to provide the Solo Serve Site. Therefore, the Public Education Committee was still looking for a place to hold the event. Mr. England asked what the committee could do to advertise the Kickoff. He felt the event was worthy and needed greater promotion.

Mr. Martinez also reported on a statewide public awareness campaign being promoted in Austin. He also announced that a free remote sensing event for the region is planned; however, holding the event is contingent upon raising the \$30,000 needed to lease, transport, and man the remote sensing equipment.

Mr. Martinez reported on the draft timetable included in the mailout as follows:

- January 4th - distribution of media packets,
- January 25th and 26th - statewide air quality campaign "Drive Clean Across Texas,"
- February 1st - March 31st - air quality meetings with media,
- March 30th (now scheduled for April 6th) - Ozone Season 2002 Kickoff, and
- March 30th - April 7th (now scheduled for April 6th) - Remote Sensing Event

Commissioner Millikin asked why the Air Quality Health Alert logo was never used by the newspapers. Mr. Martinez replied that space has been an issue with the newspapers. Commissioner Millikin asked if more emphasis could be placed on what happens to San Antonio if it falls into non-attainment.

Some discussion was held on meeting federal standards. Scott Erickson remarked that along with the potential loss of federal funding for a designation of non-attainment, the community needed a health study with strong figures on health effects due to poor air quality. Rebecca Gray with the American Lung Association reported that a recent extensive survey had been conducted by the Metropolitan Health on local school children's health. It included asthma, diabetes, obesity, etc. Also, in the current legislation some studies had been approved that will include San Antonio. However, a study on numbers of hospitalizations of children due to lung diseases was needed.

Mention was made as to the consequences of non-attainment by Mr. Treutler. Mr. Freeman remarked that perhaps a word like consequences of non-attainment sounded better on the report. Commissioner Kight remarked that a shorter more succinct version of the information needed to be presented to the public. Comments were made on locations for the kickoff activities. One recommendation was to look at Crossroads Mall Park and Ride; another recommendation was to look into mall areas.

Commissioner Millikin motioned to accept the proposed public education package and to approve the format for the campaign. The motion was seconded and the motion passed.

VI.A. Texas Near Non-Attainment Areas Meeting Report

Steve Smeltzer reported on the Texas Near Non-Attainment Areas meeting. Three separate issues were discussed. First, the new photochemical model that is being developed for the September 1999 episode was discussed. He reported that the meteorological and inventory reports were completed for the episode. With regards to modeling and reporting, all that remains to be completed is the CAMx runs. The model is scheduled to be delivered to AACOG on December 14th. ENVIRON, the company developing the model, will be providing AACOG staff with training on the model in January. ENVIRON is developing two separate runs for the 1999 episode. One uses the original meteorological data and one includes supplemental data from a local scientist, Forest Mims.

The second item of business was updating the conceptual model. This model identifies the meteorological conditions associated with days of high ambient ozone concentrations. Plans are to update the conceptual model by February 2002. The initial results of this update are two candidate episodes for the third photochemical modeling episode. These are August 26-30th, 1998 and September 14-18th, 2000. Mr. Smeltzer indicated a preference to use a modeling episode from the more recent ozone seasons; but there weren't sufficient consecutive days with high ozone levels during 2001 to qualify for the third episode.

The third item of business was discussion regarding a task in the original work plan for the near non-attainment areas. The work plan set aside \$59,600 from each near non-attainment area, which is roughly \$300,000, to do a heavy-duty truck study. In the meantime, TXDOT is spending 2 million dollars on a heavy-duty truck study. Instead of duplicating their effort, a technical near non-attainment areas sub-committee has been appointed to look into what can be done with the money to augment TxDOT's heavy-duty truck study.

VI.B. Ozone Monitor Placement Reports

Mr. Smeltzer explained to the committee that AACOG was under contract to perform ozone monitoring for the region in 2002 and 2003. AACOG budgeted \$170,000 for two years of ozone monitoring. These are monitors that would be set up in the San Antonio MSA. The monitors need to be up and running by the beginning of the ozone season, which starts April 1, 2002. In order to accomplish this, an RFP needs to be sent out by the end of January. Consequently, the Executive Committee needs to decide by the next meeting in January as to the location of the monitors.

Chairman Heath asked Mr. Smeltzer if he could relate this particular monitoring activity to the monitoring being done by TNRCC. Mr. Smeltzer explained that, currently, TNRCC has four ozone monitors in the San Antonio region (although it is anticipated that the downtown CPS monitor will be eliminated). AACOG's Natural Resources staff wants to augment the data provided by current monitors, install monitors in other areas and counties, provide ozone mapping and provide data for the other counties.

Mr. Smeltzer indicated existing monitoring sites using a map presentation. Each existing site was discussed as well as strategic locations for new monitors, such as schools. He explained that the technical committee was looking at several areas to recommend. The first recommendation was to place a monitor in NW Comal County where population density is expected to increase rapidly. The second option is SW Bexar County and the third option was requesting TNRCC to relocate CAMS 58 closer to the Kendall County border. This recommendation was initially made by TNRCC so that there could be more of a separation between the CAMS 23 and CAMS 58 monitors.

Mr. Smeltzer explained that in order to move CAMS 58 before the start of ozone season, which is April 1st, TNRCC would need a letter from the committee authorizing the change immediately. Renee Green asked if, in the event TNRCC moved CAMS 58, would the three-year clock used for air quality designations start over again for that monitor. Mr. Smeltzer replied yes. Mr. Smeltzer explained that the reason TNRCC was willing to move the monitor was related to logistical problems of having a monitor located at a military installation. Mr. Smeltzer also pointed to an inexpensive alternative for downtown San Antonio which would enable an existing monitor to be hooked up to TNRCC at Trinity University.

Another recommendation was to place a monitor near the City of Seguin or the New Braunfels airport. Commissioner Kight expressed concern over the minimum number of testing sites. Mayor Heath asked that the committee consider the possible relocation of CAMS 58 near, but not in Kendall County, and that during the January meeting, the committee consider recommendations from the Technical Committee on monitor placements. Dr. Splitek indicated that schools would probably be receptive to the idea of allowing monitors on their campuses. If it was helpful, he would be happy to work with staff to contact schools. Mayor Heath thanked Dr. Splitek and asked for a motion. A motion was made by Chris Treutler to move CAMS 58 closer to Kendall County but within Bexar County. Commissioner Millikin seconded the motion and the motion passed.

VI. C. Further Control Strategy Developments

Peter Bella reported that the Technical Committee was requesting support from the Executive Committee to implement an on-line emission factors survey locally developed in Austin with help from TNRCC and the Austin Chamber of Commerce. Kate Williams, TNRCC staff member, explained that the survey is a tool designed to solicit emission reductions from the business communities. It is not designed to be a survey method, but rather, designed to help companies determine how their business practices create emissions and also provides a means for quantifying those emissions. Then it suggests measures that can be taken to reduce emissions. For example, an employer can use the web site to determine the amount of air pollution cut when twenty employees commute to work.

Ms. Williams suggested that she contact the company that designed the program to provide a presentation on the program. Mayor Heath recommended that, with the committee's consensus, staff return with more information in the January meeting on the survey tool for their consideration. It was agreed.

VI. D. Amendments to the O3Flex Plan/Proposed Letter to Chairman Huston

Mr. Bella explained that the purpose of the draft letter to TNRCC Chairman Huston was to assure him that, although I/M was removed from the Control Strategy Section of the

O3Flex Plan, we continue to be aggressive in our air quality planning. The committee continues to be thoughtful and aggressive and hard working in its commitment to air quality in San Antonio. Mayor Heath asked the committee for a motion. Bill England motioned to approve the letter to TNRCC. Commissioner Millikin seconded the motion. The motion unanimously passed.

Discussion was held on the O3Flex Plan and the amended document that needed to be formally submitted to the elected officials and thereafter formally submitted to TNRCC. Mayor Heath asked for more time to consider the changes in the document.

VII. A. Off-Road Equipment Subcommittee Report

Steven Smeltzer provided a program summary on the Heavy Equipment Air Pollution Control Workshop held on October 9, 2001. He reported on the high quality of speakers involved in the workshop and the successful participation of vendors. He was disappointed in the attendance of the workshop and hoped that increased public awareness efforts result in greater attendance at the next workshop. A second off-road event was being planned for the summer of 2002.

VII. B. Proposed EDI Tessman Road Landfill Power Station

For the committee's information, Mr. Smeltzer reported that there was a proposed landfill power station in east Bexar County that might have an impact on the air quality in San Antonio. Commissioner Kight asked for clarification on its impact. Mayor Heath asked staff to pursue answers to his question.

Mayor Heath reported on a meeting held the previous day on LIRAP. Commissioner Millikin, Mayor Heath, and several Technical Committee members met with Charissa Barnes, Representative Chisum and several others including Representatives John Shields, Frank Morgan, and David Counts. Discussion was held on different options for inspection and maintenance and how to use the LIRAP system. He concluded that this issue was still a work in progress.

VIII. Adjournment

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

O3Flex Plan Report

A. Review of the Current Status, Goals and Timeline of the Ozone Flex Plan for the San Antonio Metropolitan Statistical Area

Air Improvement Resources Chairman Patrick Heath has requested that all those involved in the development of the Ozone Flex Plan for the San Antonio Metropolitan Statistical Area renew their understanding of the mission, responsibilities, accomplishments to date, and overall goals of this endeavor. A single important new initiative, the Chamber of Commerce initiative described in this section, accompanies and complements this request. The staff of the other AIR Committees – the Public Education, Off-Road, and Technical Committees – has been asked to invest fresh energy and imagination to assure the success of the O3Flex Plan. Their reports appear later in the agenda.

Current Status and Goals

The central goal of the Ozone Flex Plan for the San Antonio Metropolitan Area remains to assure clean, healthful air to the citizens of the region. The air that these citizens now enjoy does meet federal air quality standards for ozone, lead, particulate matter, carbon monoxide, sulfur dioxide and nitrogen dioxide. Hence, no control strategies requiring locally enacted legislation are found in the O3Flex Plan.

All of the control strategies in the plan are voluntary and non-binding to any of the signatory governments who will be asked to approve the plan. Instead, local leaders in business and industry throughout the region have volunteered to enact the control strategies in the plan. Other emission reductions are achieved by the actions of the state legislature, such as Senate Bill 5, which requires reductions in energy consumption and power generation. State and federal controls have done much to help maintain our air quality without local intervention. Further voluntary strategies are envisioned through a new partnership with the local Chambers of Commerce, their membership, and the Air Improvement Resources Committee.

- Requirements of the Ozone Flex Plan

The O3Flex Plan will require the full agreement of some of the important governmental agencies in Wilson, Guadalupe, Comal and Bexar Counties, given through the signature of their elected officials. While signing the O3Flex Plan does not require new and binding legislation, it does require a committed awareness to the ongoing air quality challenge we face.

Should our air quality become threatened again, as it has in the recent past, the plan requires the signatory parties, as members of the AIR Committee, to investigate one or more control strategies to be implemented locally to bring our region's air quality back to healthful levels. The O3Flex Plan calls for the development of further emission control measures which are quantifiable and enforceable in the event the state and federal controls are not adequately effective. The candidate control measures, chosen according to careful technical analysis, are listed in the O3Flex Plan in the Contingency Matrix.

- Benefits of the Ozone Flex Plan

The O3Flex Plan provides the mechanism for a rapid response if and when San Antonio's air quality becomes threatened, as it has in the recent past. Since, however,

control strategy implementation takes time and effectiveness must be judged over time, the O3Flex Plan guarantees time between the signing of the plan and any possible non-attainment designation under the only currently-enforced federal ozone standard, the one-hour ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standard (NAAQS). Since the 1997 eight-hour ozone standard enacted under the NAAQS was upheld in a decision by the U.S. Supreme Court and will eventually become enforceable, the O3Flex Plan provides for flexibility from the EPA in imposing requirements upon implementation of the eight-hour ozone NAAQS, such as availability of an applicable alternative classification scheme.

And the Ozone Flex Plan provides a platform for local governments, local business and industry, and local citizens to work together with the TNRCC and the EPA for local air quality. The basic concept behind the Ozone Flex Plan initiative remains the creation of local solutions to local air quality challenges. The work of the Air Improvement Resources Committee brings all these stakeholders together for this purpose.

Timeline

The general timeline for completion of the Ozone Flex Plan is suggested as follows.

1. January AIR Exec/Advisory meeting: Review of the plan as outlined here. Review the chronology of Plan development, major elements of the Plan in its latest draft, and implications of implementing the Plan. Review the Chamber of Commerce initiative.
2. Begin meetings with Greater San Antonio Chamber of Commerce on developing a program similar to Austin's. Offer "Air Pollution 101" Power Point presentation for use at various Chamber meetings. A draft version will be presented during the January 23rd meeting of the AIR Executive/Advisory Committee.
3. February AIR Exec/Advisory meeting: AIR Committee votes to send the Clean Air Plan to local governments for adoption/signature (by May 1, 2002).
4. May: Meet with EPA/TNRCC to give them a status report on our Clean Air Plan and associated activities.

B. The Chamber of Commerce Initiative

During the Air Improvement Resources Executive / Advisory Committee meeting of December 5th, staff first reported the recommendation of the AIR Technical Committee to pursue expansion of voluntary emission reduction strategies and a fresh commitment to gathering new partners in business and industry who will participate in those strategies. The AIR Executive / Advisory Committee directed staff to continue refinement of such a project and return to the AIR Committee with a proposal recommendation. These strategies are designed to strengthen the Ozone Flex Plan for the San Antonio Metropolitan Statistical Area. Recent developments and further recommendations by the AIR Technical Committee in this effort are the subject of this report.

• **Austin's Clean Air Partners Program**

On Monday, December 17th, staff from the City of San Antonio and AACOG traveled to Austin to meet with several representatives of the Texas Natural Resource Conservation Commission (TNRCC) and the Greater Austin Chamber of Commerce (ACC). The goal of the meeting was to explore the efforts of the TNRCC and the ACC to achieve the expansion of voluntary control strategy implementation within the Austin business community. Local staff met with Thais Austin, VP for Public Policy in the Greater Austin Chamber of Commerce and W. David Balfour, Senior VP & Office Manager with URS Corporation in Austin. Mr. Balfour has been largely responsible for coordinating the work of ACC and TNRCC in this effort. The meeting took place at the

suggestion of Kate Williams, who was in charge of TNRCC's contribution. Both she and Mike Magee (also of TNRCC) attended the meeting.

According to Mr. Balfour, Austin's investigations began when several members of the ACC proactively sought out voluntary control strategies they could implement. Acting through the ACC and the Clean Air Force¹, Mr. Balfour and TNRCC created several task force panels to study control strategies applicable to individual business types (e.g., landscaping work) that could be implemented voluntarily. Initially, the measures were designed to either help the region avoid a declaration of non-attainment under the 8-hour ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standards or at least keep their air quality from degenerating further in the Austin area. The ACC membership now also considers their efforts educational – that is, by educating the business community, they educate the greater public at large. Their work has resulted in the formation of the Clean Air Partners Program² (maintained by the ACC and the Clean Air Force) and a voluntary control strategy implementation questionnaire.

The questionnaire is called the Emissions Profile Tool. Developed by the ACC/TNRCC and implemented as an Excel spreadsheet, the tool allows virtually any business to 1) determine a gross calculation of the emissions reductions earned by any strategies they do currently employ, 2) determine which additional control strategies, specific to their business, they could employ (suggested additional strategies are part of the spreadsheet), 3) determine a gross calculation of any emission reductions they could earn by implementing additional control strategies, and 4) voluntarily sign a Memorandum of Understanding committing their company to implement and maintain control strategies. Hence, the questionnaire is designed to determine existing voluntary clean air efforts as well as encourage further implementation of control strategies and, in so doing, to promote awareness of air quality issues in the business community.

Demonstration of Business Commitment

While membership in the Clean Air Partners Program is open to any central Texas business, public entity, or organization in the 5-county area of Bastrop, Caldwell, Hays, Travis and Williamson counties, partnership does require a set of commitments. These commitments require that:

1. The company will complete the questionnaire (Emissions Profile Tool) and submit the results to the ACC. The ACC will keep the results confidential, if the company chooses. The results act as an "emissions baseline" against which future reductions will be measured.
2. The company pledges to reduce this emission baseline by at least 10% within a three-year period.
3. The company reports the results of their pledged strategy every six months. The company is recognized for the emissions reductions reported. This reporting can be accomplished online. Recognition of the business and their commitment success is made online, released by the ACC and by the Clean Air Force. Also, in a process called Technology Transfer, emission reduction "success stories" are shared by member agencies during Chamber meetings.

¹ The Clean Air Force is online at <http://www.cleanairforce.org/> . They are something like the AIR Committee here in San Antonio; see the roster for their Board of Directors at http://www.cleanairforce.org/programs/caf_board.htm

² Information about the Clean Air Partnership is available online: <http://www.cleanairpartnerstx.org/>

Furthermore, the ACC has, as their goal, active participation by 10% of their membership. The ACC has already given a publicized roll-out of their program, is following up with distribution of the Emissions Profile Tool, and is creating an online version of the Tool with online confidentiality safeguards.

The ACC has just begun a second phase of implementation using “Clean Air Ambassadors,” individuals from Clean Air Partner businesses who are willing to work with other businesses peer-to-peer and ask them to join the program. Other future plans include forming like-business partnerships for buying alt-fuel and alt-fuel machinery (e.g., alt-fuel lawn-mowing equipment).

It should be noted that emissions reductions calculated through the Emissions Profile Tool would likely not be fully creditable through EPA. That is, some of the factors used to approximate the emission reductions achieved by the voluntary control strategies are not EPA-approved factors, but rather were drawn up by TNRCC staff. This is in keeping with the concept of reduction strategy implementation for the sake of air quality improvement and public education. As we have seen in San Antonio, if the more-effective voluntary control strategies such as Inspection and Maintenance are set aside and less-costly strategies are considered, the less-costly voluntary strategies are difficult to quantify and enforce to the technical / legal standards required by EPA. This is not an indication that the strategies are ineffective, but that they are difficult to quantify and enforce. If the O3Flex Plan is not to incorporate control strategies such as I/M, then strengthening the O3Flex Plan may be achieved by the incorporation of non-creditable strategies such as the Clean Air Partnership.

- Conclusion

The Clean Air Partnership is an ambitious program promising a relatively high-profile involvement by members of the Greater Austin Chamber of Commerce in voluntary emissions reduction strategies. The effort demonstrates the strong commitment of the Austin business community and the ACC to regional air quality improvements. The membership goal of 10% of the ACC membership in the Clean Air Partners program and an emissions reduction goal of 10% for each Clean Air Partner shows this commitment. Reaching such goals represent valuable emissions reductions, valuable participation in and awareness by business and industry of the clean air challenge faced by the region, and public education through the businesses and their employees and so to the public at large.

The Clean Air Partnership, as it is operated in Austin, requires the dedication of the Clean Air Force and, especially, the ACC. To recap, the ACC:

1. Has created the working groups to estimate reductions achievable;
2. Has created the Emissions Profile Tool allowing individual businesses to understand and implement the reduction strategies available to them;
3. Has created the Memorandum of Understanding, as part of the Emissions Profile Tool, which asks for commitment to the Clean Air Partners program;
4. Has created an ongoing partnership, the Clean Air Partnership, to encourage and reward participation by the business community in the implementation of voluntary control strategies;
5. Has sponsored the public roll-out of the Clean Air Partnership program;
6. Maintains the website for the registration of participants and the secure database to record associated reductions by individual businesses; and
7. Rewards recognition based on six-month updates to participation records.

- **Implications for San Antonio**

The Clean Air Partnership program is ambitious. Yet participation by the business community in clean air planning and policy awareness represents a valuable and critical, if not simply necessary, building block to a successful regional planning strategy. Effective public education remains critical to the success of our efforts, and the business community is one sector likely to be directly hit by permitting and emissions restrictions should we go into non-attainment.

The depth of commitment by the ACC may or may not be reproducible here in San Antonio. Staff strongly encourages a parallel development in San Antonio, which is clearly dependent on the willingness of the local business community.

Recommendations of the AIR Technical Committee Regarding

A. Review of the Current Status, Goals and Timeline of the Ozone Flex Plan

B. The Chamber of Commerce Initiative

During the January 14th meeting of the AIR Technical Committee, the committee advised adherence to the strategies and means outlined by Chairman Heath. In particular, they suggested:

- 1.) Rewriting completely the presentations so that they would define the O3Flex Plan in terms of goals, current commitments by local stakeholders, and benefits of O3Flex Plan commitment. Such presentations should include mention of the recently enacted state-sponsored measures, such as SB5 and the delayed school start date.
- 2.) Strongly that the AIR Executive/Advisory Committees act in favor of the Chamber of Commerce initiative. They added that, as advised by TNRCC in the parallel Austin development, the Chamber of Commerce initiative should be reviewed and reevaluated on an annual basis.
- 3.) That further work on the Chamber initiative should address program cost sharing. That is, some of the required funding should come from business partners in the program and some from other local agencies.

- **Final Notes**

At the conclusion of the Austin meeting on December 17th, Mr. Balfour offered to host a meeting to discuss these ideas with San Antonio Chamber of Commerce leaders. However, it is up to San Antonio to actually come forward with a proposal and set up a meeting with the local Chambers of Commerce before any plan would move forward. TNRCC has pledged their support on any development of this program in which we'd care to invest time and effort. The ACC has given us permission to use any of their materials developed in the numbered list above, which represents much of the background development required.

In addition, EPA will work with the AIR Committee on the inclusion of the Chamber initiative. Specifically, AACOG staff spoke with Michael Morton of EPA Region 6, who suggested that the Chamber initiative need not be completed before the Ozone Flex Plan is signed. As is the case in Austin, this can be an ongoing effort with clean air results that come over time, as is typical with implementation of most air quality efforts.

Action Requested: Approval of Chamber of Commerce Initiative

Emissions Estimates for Proposed Tessman Road LFG Power Station

The proposed Tessman Road LFG Power Station is located in Bexar County near Converse, TX. The station will feature six Deutz TBG 620 V16 engines, producing electricity from methane and other landfill gases. The following chart shows the estimated emissions of the Deutz Engine and those of Flare Burning at the Tessman Rd LFG Power Plant proposed for Bexar County :

Pollutant	Deutz Engine: 6 Engines (tons/day)	Flare Burning Equivalent to 6 Engines (tons/day)
NOx	0.179	0.065
CO	0.596	0.352
VOC	0.049	0.073
PM ₁₀	0.027	0.055

AACOG Solid Waste Advisory Committee (SWAC) stated in the memorandum to the Board of Directors, dated November 29, 2001, that the project will not create a significant impact on the air quality of the area. While the NOx emissions increase, the VOCs and Particular Matter emissions show decreases from the estimated levels for flare burning. The San Antonio MSA is VOC sensitive; thus, lowering VOC emissions is more effective in reducing ozone levels than NOx control strategies.

The following charts compare the Ozone level in San Antonio with and without the Tessman Rd LFG Power Plant. The charts indicate there was a slight increase in the Ozone levels, but the increase is insignificant.

Change in Ozone levels for SA MSA near the CAMS Stations for the Proposed EDI Tessman Road Landfill Gas Power Plant compared to the Design Value, CAMS 23.

	2007 (ppb)	2007 with EDI LFG Power Plan (ppb)	Percentage Change
Day 3	81.28	81.30	0.03%
Day 4	84.20	84.21	0.02%
Day 5	84.49	84.50	0.01%
Day 6	84.35	84.37	0.02%
Average	83.58	83.60	0.02%

8 hour average, 7X7 Grid

Change in Ozone levels for SA MSA near the CAMS Stations for the Proposed EDI Tessman Road Landfill Gas Power Plant compared to the Design Value, CAMS 58.

	2007 (ppb)	2007 with EDI LFG Power Plan (ppb)	Percentage Change
Day 3	80.35	80.38	0.03%
Day 4	83.24	83.25	0.02%
Day 5	83.53	83.54	0.01%
Day 6	83.39	83.41	0.02%
Average	82.63	82.65	0.02%

8 hour average, 7X7 Grid

Landfill Gas Background Information

Landfill gas can be captured and sold as an energy source for a number of purposes, the most common being generation of electricity at electric utilities. Other uses include generating heat and electricity in industrial facilities; substituting for or supplementing natural gas; and producing compressed natural gas for auto fuel.

Landfill gas is about half methane and half carbon dioxide, with small amounts of other organic compounds. The methane portion is what makes the gas saleable. Methane, virtually identical to natural gas, contributes 18 percent of all global warming emissions, and is about 25 times more powerful than carbon dioxide (the primary greenhouse gas) in trapping heat in the earth's atmosphere. Landfills are the largest human-generated source of methane in the country, contributing about 37 percent of all emissions. Methane also contributes to the formation of smog and poses an explosion hazard if uncontrolled.

Since 1996, EPA has had a national rule that controls air pollution from large landfills that emit more than 50 megagrams per year of non-methane organic compounds. Under the rule, the landfills are required to capture the gas anyway, so they have an incentive to take the next logical step and sell it as an energy source. However, hundreds of smaller landfills are not subject to the rule, and have less incentive to develop gas utilization projects. Collectively, these small landfills, more than 900 nationwide, emit enough landfill gas to generate more than 1100 megawatts of power, enough to heat more than 700,000 homes per year. Also, by capturing and selling this amount of gas, nearly 10 million tons of global warming gases are prevented from entering the atmosphere, an action equivalent to removing almost 10 million cars from America's roads each year.

Information on EPA's national Landfill Methane Outreach Program to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from small landfills is available at: <http://www.epa.gov/lmop/> . For further technical information, contact Brian Guzzone of EPA at 202-564-2666 (guzzone.brian@epa.gov)

The "Landfill Gas Background Information" above was obtained from the Environmental Protection Agency. The source, a press release titled "Grant To Develop Marketable Energy From Landfills In Seven North Carolina Counties," is dated December 26, 2001. Press Release URL:

<http://yosemite1.epa.gov/opa/admpress.nsf/b1ab9f485b098972852562e7004dc686/e5bc5aaae38392a185256b2e00619dc0?OpenDocument>

- VI. Technical Reports
- B. Status of the Joint Photochemical Modeling Episode

Status of the Joint Photochemical Modeling Episode

ENVIRON has completed the draft Emission Inventory Preparation report, Meteorological report, and the Draft Final Report of the 1999 Joint Photochemical Modeling Episode. This comprehensive effort will provide a new ozone modeling episode for the major metropolitan areas including Austin, San Antonio, Victoria and Corpus Christi. AACOG staff is currently reviewing the reports. ENVIRON is scheduled to provide the final reports at the end of January. These reports will be sent out for review during the next AIR Committee meeting.

The 1999 CAMx episode is being loaded onto a new computer purchased by AACOG and designed expressly for operation of the new Photochemical model. ENVIRON has completed 10 runs of the Photochemical model to calibrate the model.

Also, ENVIRON is going to provide two final runs of the model. The first run is the base case and the second run includes Mr. Forrest Mims' local meteorological data in the model's database. ENVIRON will provide AACOG with a copy of the second run at a later date.

Moving CAMS 58 and Placing Sulfur Dioxide Monitor at CAMS 23

During the AIR Executive/Advisory meeting of December 5th, the AIR Committee agreed with a recommendation by the AIR Technical Committee to request of TNRCC that CAMS 58 be moved. A letter requesting that the monitor be moved was approved and sent to TNRCC Chairman Robert Huston. This report discusses that issue and a different recommendation by TNRCC technical staff. TNRCC staff advised that establishing a sulfur dioxide (SO₂) monitor at CAMS 23 (Marshall High School) would allow air quality researchers in San Antonio and in TNRCC to track the transport of sulfur dioxide from point sources (power and cement plants) in our region. This helps researchers determine the contributions to ozone which these point sources create.

Synopsis

- Moving CAMS 58 is not now advised. It may be advised if new monitoring near Kendall / Bexar border provides ozone levels higher than those of CAMS 58.
- Letter for placement of SO₂ monitor at CAMS 23 advised.

CAMS 58

Following discussions with technical staff from the Texas Natural Resource Conservation Commission (TNRCC), the AIR Technical Committee had recommended that the CAMS 58 (Camp Bullis) ozone monitoring equipment be moved to a location in Bexar County nearer to the Bexar/Kendall border. During the December 5th meeting of the Air Improvement Resources (AIR) Executive / Advisory Committees, the committee approved that recommendation.

Pursuant to this recommendation, staff (Peter Bella from AACOG) attended a meeting on January 10th of TNRCC's Network Design Team, charged with the responsibility of monitoring network analysis and related decisions. Network Design Team (NDT) leader Joe Panketh stated that, on further investigation, TNRCC reported finding no need to move CAMS 58 based on Camp Bullis accessibility issues. While the monitoring equipment maintenance personnel had reported access difficulties initially following September 11th, those access issues had been resolved. Bryan Lambeth, staff meteorologist at TNRCC, reported that the length of time required to gain approval to relocate a federally-approved monitoring site was about six months. Hence, if the process were begun in January, approval to move the site would likely arrive in the middle of the 2002 ozone season. Disrupting the monitoring cycle is not practical.

The NDT was aware of the AACOG Work Plan calling for the establishment of more regional ozone monitors. The team said that, if an ozone monitor was established under the work plan, located near the Kendall/Bexar County border, and recorded significantly higher 2002 ozone readings than CAMS 58, then the TNRCC would likely be willing to propose moving CAMS 58 to a new location.

Steve Spaw, Director of TNRCC Monitoring Operations Division, mentioned that it might be advisable to begin processing the necessary EPA paperwork now. In the case that the Kendall/Bexar border location did provide significantly higher readings during the 2002 ozone season, then the move could be expedited and the site readied for use during the 2003 ozone season. This idea was generally agreed upon, if San Antonio does in fact place an ozone monitor on the Kendall/Bexar border.

Sulfur Dioxide Monitor at CAMS 23

Mr. Lambeth said that an additional question was whether or not TNRCC could place a sulfur dioxide monitor at CAMS 23 (Marshall High School). This could help determine

VI. Technical Reports

C. Moving CAMS 58 and Placing Sulfur Dioxide Monitor at CAMS 23

the impact of emissions from the point sources within the San Antonio airshed. Mr. Bella said that, with the approval of the AIR Technical Committee and, then, of the AIR Executive/Advisory Committee, a letter of support for placing an SO₂ monitor at CAMS 23 would be forthcoming.

AIR Technical Committee Recommendations

During their January 14th meeting, the AIR Technical Committee agreed with the recommendations of the Network Design Team that CAMS 58 not be moved. Further, they agreed that establishing a sulfur dioxide monitor at the CAMS 23 location would be beneficial to the technical analysis required of air quality planners here. This monitor will not be established or maintained using local funds, but would be established and maintained by TNRCC.

The AIR Technical Committee approved a draft letter requesting the establishment of the SO₂ monitor at CAMS 23.

Action Requested: Approval of Letter to TNRCC regarding Establishing a sulfur dioxide monitor at CAMS 23 (the Marshall High School location)

Ozone Monitor Placement

Under the 2002-2003 Work Plan with TNRCC, the Alamo Area Council of Governments (AACOG) will establish several ozone monitoring sites for the San Antonio region. Their placement and the related RFP are the subjects of this report.

Synopsis

- Letter requesting that ozone levels from AACOG monitors be placed on the TNRCC monitoring database advised.
- O3 monitoring equipment maintenance / QAQC procedures accepted by AIR Technical Committee.
- Budget might allow for the establishment of as many as four ozone monitoring locations in addition to those now in the San Antonio region.

New Monitoring Data to be put on TNRCC's Website – allows creation of a Real Time Ozone Map by TNRCC for the San Antonio Region

TNRCC staff suggested a letter from the AIR Committee and AACOG requesting that AACOG's monitoring data be made accessible to TNRCC for use and display on TNRCC's monitoring data website. Steve Spaw has also offered to create a near-real-time ozone map for San Antonio, depending on data availability, which would be similar to the ozone maps available for the Dallas-Fort Worth, Beaumont-Port Arthur and Houston-Galveston-Brazoria areas (see http://www.tnrcc.state.tx.us/cgi-bin/monops/ozone_animation). The AIR Committee membership may recall that creation of an animated real-time ozone map was one of two goals of earlier EPA EMPACT Metro Grant submissions, as a Public Education effort.

Data Quality Control / Quality Assurance for AACOG's Ozone Monitors

Dave Sullivan, head of TNRCC's Monitoring Data Management and Analysis Section, and Bryan Lambeth, staff meteorologist with TNRCC, agreed that the data collected from the ozone monitors established by AACOG under the TNRCC 2002-2003 Work Plan would carry adequate data quality control / quality assessment by following several guidelines. These guidelines were reported to the AIR Technical Committee.

Cost Considerations

Basic Cost Estimates for Establishment and Operation of Ozone Monitors

\$11,560	Equipment Total, per site
\$16,200	Approximate Installation/Maintenance/Operation Costs for first season
\$8,000	Operate and maintain equipment for second season
\$35,760	Basic per-site installation and operation, two years
\$9,900	Addition Equipment Costs
\$152,940	Four monitors, two years (Basic per-site operation), Add'l Equipment Costs

These costs do not reflect the possibility of establishing meteorological equipment at the ozone monitoring sites. If funding is adequate, the AIR Technical Committee suggested that meteorological monitoring equipment purchase and use be listed as Optional Tasks in the RFP. If the bids for the entire task set fall within the \$170,000 budget provided for in the AACOG work plan, having weather information to supplement the ozone data would be very valuable.

AIR Technical Committee Recommendations

During their January 14th meeting, the AIR Technical Committee supported the request by TNRCC for a letter from the AIR Committee that the ozone monitoring data be placed on the TNRCC website. This effort will help the AIR Committee maximize the public education applications of this data. Moreover, if the creation of the animated real-time ozone map is approved by the TNRCC, this same data will enable the public education effort still further. The AIR Technical Committee approved a draft letter requesting the online publication of the AACOG-sponsored ozone monitoring data. Also, the AIR Technical Committee approved the data QA/QC measures outlined by the TNRCC. This QA/QC procedure will produce ozone monitoring data of sufficient quality standards to be used for the production of a real-time animated ozone map for the San Antonio region. It is to be noted that a sufficient number and distribution of ozone monitoring sites will be required to establish a real-time animated ozone map.

The AIR Technical Committee has formed an Ozone Monitoring Placement Subcommittee. Together with technical staff from the TNRCC, they have established preferred locations for the ozone monitors to be established under the work plan. While these locations are being negotiated, the current locations being considered and pursued are listed below.

First Choices for Ozone Monitoring Placement	
Southern Comal County:	Bulverde Elementary, 1715 E. Ammann Rd., Bulverde, Tx. (Comal County)
Southwest Bexar County:	Elm Creek Elem., 11535 Pearsall Road, Atascosa, Tx. (Bexar County)
Near Kendall/Bexar County Border:	Fair Oaks Ranch Elementary, Fair Oaks Ranch. Tx. (Bexar County)
Northeast of San Antonio:	Nat'l Weather Service: New Braunfels Airport, 2090 Airport Road, New Braunfels, Tx. (Guadalupe County)

In addition, staff is investigating several additional locations. Forrest Mims has offered the use of his Geronimo Creek Observatory just outside Seguin. Trinity University may operate an ozone monitoring site on campus through this effort, as well. If any of the first choice locations are not usable, alternatives will have to be sought.

Other Issues

Staff hopes to be able to complete siting negotiations to release an RFP for the ozone monitoring equipment maintenance and operation by the end of January. The goal is to be able to establish and begin operation of the sites by April 1, the beginning of the ozone season. It may be possible to operate off of the ozone monitoring contract currently being operated by City Public Service. CPS is responsible for establishing and maintaining CAMS 678, the Pecan Valley monitoring location. Also, staff is investigating working together with the Capitol Area Planning Council (CAPCO) in Austin. It might prove advantageous to share a contract for ozone monitors operated in both San Antonio and Austin.

**Action Requested: Approval of AIR Tech Committee Recommendations
and Letter to TNRCC regarding Data Publication**

**Draft Letter to Chairman Huston
SO₂ Monitor and O₃ Data Display**

Dear Chairman Huston,

Under the 2002-2003 Work Plan with TNRCC, the Alamo Area Council of Governments (AACOG) will establish several ozone monitoring sites for the San Antonio region. The goals of this extended monitoring system will be to provide data for 1) the verification and refinement of the regional photochemical model, 2) a better informed population exposure / risk assessment for the citizens in our airshed, and 3) the creation of a real-time ozone map for the San Antonio region.

During conversations with TNRCC's technical staff, conducted during meetings of the Air Improvement Resources (AIR) Technical Committee and in Austin during the Network Design Team meeting of January 10, the AIR Technical Committee has come to appreciate the value of placing a sulfur dioxide air monitor at the CAMS 23 (Marshall High School) location. Having an SO₂ monitor there would help determine the contribution by local point sources to regional ozone formation. The AIR Committee respectfully requests that the TNRCC consider placing a sulfur dioxide monitor at CAMS 23.

Given the goals of the extended monitoring now being developed, both AACOG and the AIR Committee would like to be able to use the resulting ozone data for public education to the fullest possible extent possible. AIR Technical Committee and TNRCC technical staff have discussed the possibility of placing the AACOG-operated site data on TNRCC's Monitoring Operations website. It has been suggested that we specifically request your acknowledgement and permission to do so. This follows an agreement with Steve Spaw, head of TNRCC's Monitoring Operations Division, that the data delivered from the AACOG monitors will originate with monitoring and data transfer equipment that is quality controlled and quality assured by AACOG to meet necessary TNRCC standards, before being approved for display by TNRCC.

Thank you for your cooperation and consideration of these matters.

Sincerely,

Honorable Patrick Heath
Chair, AIR Committee

Honorable Jay Millikin
Vice-Chair, AIR Committee

Off-Road Equipment Subcommittee Report

The Off-Road Equipment Subcommittee continues to be an active component of the overall plan to develop and implement voluntary ozone control strategies in the SA/MSA. During the December 12, 2001 meeting, the subcommittee reviewed the past successes of the subcommittee and outlined future goals.

Off-Road Equipment Subcommittee Successes:

- Public Outreach – Provider of information on the current air quality situation and methods available for reducing emissions
 - October 2001 Heavy Equipment Air Pollution Control Workshop
 - AGC – San Antonio Luncheon
 - AGC – Austin Luncheon
- Helped to facilitate the consideration and adoption of emission reducing products and fuels through vendor presentations at monthly meetings and the Heavy Equipment Air Pollution Control Workshop.
 - Fuel Vapor Enhancer – Emissions Technology of Texas
 - Oil Filtration System – Puradyn
 - OxyDiesel – AAE Technologies
 - Diesel additives & OxyDiesel – Octel Starreon
 - Performance Gold Diesel – Koch Industries
 - Propane Conversions – Harrison & Associates

Off-Road Equipment Subcommittee Future Direction:

- Public Outreach – Continue and improve on public outreach efforts
 - Joint SA-Austin air pollution control workshop for the off-road community (tentatively scheduled for July or August of 2002)
 - Participating in off-road related workshops as an information provider.
 - Serving as an information resource for the off-road community with regard to air pollution control strategies.
- Produce a directory of emission reducing products and services available to this region specific to the off-road community
 - Outline of Current Air Quality Situation
 - Voluntary Measures for Reducing Emissions
 - Air Quality Health Alert Day Measures
 - Maintenance Education
 - Operational Procedures
 - Retrofits
 - Alternative Fuels
 - Cleaner Equipment
 - Inventory of Voluntary Measures Already in Use
- Produce additional vendor presentations at the monthly subcommittee meetings
- Explore incentives and funding opportunities specific to implementing voluntary control strategies for reducing emissions.
- Expanding the focus of the subcommittee to include commercial and industrial users of off-road equipment

VII. Other Issues

A. Off-Road Equipment Subcommittee Report

- Forklifts
- Commercial Lawn Maintenance Equipment

The next subcommittee meeting is scheduled for February 13, 2002 where our efforts will continue.

- VII. Other Issues
 - B. Informational Items

Air Improvement Resources Committees 2002 Meetings Schedule

Month	Executive/Advisory	Technical	Public Education	Off-Road Equip. Subcommittee	Clean Cities
January	23 rd	14 th	7 th	9 th	17 th
February	27 th	11 th	4 th	13 th	21 st
March	27 th	18 th	4 th	13 th	21 st
April	24 th	15 th	1 st	10 th	18 th
May	22 nd	13 th	6 th	8 th	16 th
June	26 th	17 th	3 rd	12 th	20 th
July	24 th	15 th	1 st	10 th	18 th
August	28 th	12 th	5 th	14 th	15 th
September	25 th	16 th	9 th	11 th	19 th
October	23 rd	14 th	7 th	9 th	17 th
November	----	18 th	4 th	13 th	21 st
December	11 th	----	2 nd	11 th	19 th

Meetings start at:

9:00 a.m.

1:30 p.m.

1:30 p.m.

10:00 a.m.

1:30 p.m.

Courtesy of



January 6, 2002

Air pollution, birth defects linked

Study observes 9,300 babies in L.A. area

By Pat Brennan

Orange County Register

SANTA ANA, Calif. -- Air pollution may cause serious birth defects, disrupting fetal heart development in the second month of pregnancy, a new study by researchers at the University of California at Los Angeles shows.

The study makes a strong statistical link between birth defects in the Los Angeles basin and air pollution levels recorded by monitoring stations throughout the area.

"This is the first study I'm aware of linking ambient air pollution to birth defects in humans," said Jean Ospital, a health effects officer at the South Coast Air Quality Management District who read the study.

Both Ospital and the study's lead author, Dr. Beate Ritz, say follow-up studies will be needed to confirm the findings.

The study makes only a statistical association; exactly which pollutants might have caused the heart defects, or how they interfered with heart formation, remain unknown.

But the large number of children included in the study -- more than 9,300 babies born between 1987 and 1994 in California's Los Angeles, Orange, San Bernardino and Riverside counties -- helped ensure the trends the researchers spotted are likely to be real.

The study matched birth defects tracked by the California Birth Defects Monitoring Program with air pollution data gathered by 30 monitoring stations scattered through the four counties.

Mothers who lived within 10 miles of a monitoring station were included.

Of the 9,357 births tracked for the study, 935 resulted in children with heart defects.

One particularly strong "signal" emerged from the data, the authors of the study said.

When the levels of carbon monoxide or ozone gas were high, heart defects occurring in the second month of pregnancy -- when the heart forms -- jumped up as well, said John Harris, a co-author of the study and a pediatrician who is also head of the birth defects monitoring program, based in Oakland.

That's known as a dose-response relationship, when a higher dose -- in this case, of pollution -- corresponds closely to a specific problem, he said.

The statistics show the risk of such defects was two to three times greater during episodes of increased air pollution, Harris said.

The researchers say in their paper, to be published in the American Journal of Epidemiology, that statistical analysis gave them a 95 percent confidence level in their results.

VII. Other Issues
B. Informational Items

The findings could mean carbon monoxide and ozone are causing the defects, but not necessarily, Harris said.

If also could mean some other, unidentified pollutant, also present at high levels when carbon monoxide and ozone are high, is to blame.

In either case, auto exhaust is by far the most likely source.

The birth defects linked to pollution included abnormal heart valves, holes in the heart or severely deformed hearts.

All of these defects interfere with the heart's ability to pump oxygen throughout the body; some require surgery before the first year of life and, often, repeated surgeries as the child grows.

Without surgery, such conditions often lead to early death.

The paper was reviewed by experts before publication, but the identity of the reviewers, as is customary, was kept secret.

Other experts who didn't see the paper said such statistical associations are important but should be backed up by further investigation.

"It's extremely important to realize that the majority of birth defects are probably caused by poor nutrition, alcohol usage, smoking cigarettes during pregnancy, illegal and legal drugs and infection," said Bob Phalen, who researches the health effects of air pollution at the University of California at Irvine.

Ospital, of the air quality district, said he would like to see birth defect data tied to more specific information on pollution exposure.

The study's authors averaged air quality data over three-month segments, but Ospital would like to see how the birth defect results relate to pollution average over a period of hours.

Air quality also has improved since the data for the study was collected.

Email comments to [Online Managing Editor Linda Ash](#).

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Archivist's Note:

The California Birth Defects Monitoring Program homepage is <http://www.cbtmp.org/>
The abstract for Ambient Air Pollution and Risk of Birth Defects in Southern California, appearing in the *American Journal of Epidemiology* (January 1, 2002; Volume 155, Issue 1), is available online as <http://aje.oupjournals.org/cgi/content/abstract/155/1/17>.

Clean Texas Partnership Conference

The TNRCC presents the Clean Texas Partnership Conference What is Your Role in a Sustainable Texas?

February 18 - 20, 2002
Omni Hotel, San Antonio, TX

Mark your calendar for this energizing statewide environmental conference. Discover how environmental legislation passed by the Texas Legislature can lead to exciting opportunities for you and your organization. Find out about incentives and opportunities for sustainable solutions that can benefit your bottom line. Become more effective environmental stewards by participating in the nationally recognized Clean Texas program!

Invited Speakers

- Robert J. Huston, Chairman, TNRCC
- The Honorable Ed Garza, Mayor, San Antonio
- Valarie Bristol, Executive Director, Trust for Public Land
- Al J. Notzon, III, Executive Director, Alamo Area Council of Governments
- David J. Schmidly, President, Texas Tech University
- Paul Thomas, Executive Director, Green Mountain Energy

Workshops Topics

Sustainable Design, Open Space, Leadership in Business, Air Quality, Clean Transportation Initiatives, Environmental Management Systems, Regulatory Flexibility, Water Availability, Green Planning, Employee Education, Community Outreach

Tours! Entertainment! Sustainable Transportation! Student Scholarships for Sustainability!

Who should attend?

- Members of Clean Texas, Clean Cities 2000, Clean Industries, Clean Texas Star
- Representatives from industries and businesses
- State, county, and city officials involved in air, water, waste, or community issues
- Organizations who support creating a livable community
- Environmental staff from military bases, colleges, universities, and schools
- Anyone interested in preserving Texas for future generations

Hosted By

The Clean Texas Team, City of San Antonio, City Public Service, VIA Metropolitan Transit, HUD, Diamond Shamrock-Ultramar, Solar San Antonio

For more information

For registration information, contact Sue Phillips, 512/239-6327 or sphillip@tnrcc.state.tx.us For agenda information, contact Rob Borowski at 512/239-3187 or rob@cleantexas.org.

This notification available online as: <http://www.cleantexas.org/plt.html>
See also: <http://www.tnrcc.state.tx.us/admin/events/02-02ctpartner.pdf>

Dec. 14, 2001, 6:42AM

Panel OKs 55 mph limit in area to reduce smog

By RAD SALLEE

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AUSTIN -- City life is supposedly fast-paced, but motorists in the Houston area will soon have to slow down. Meanwhile, out in the jackrabbit flats of South and West Texas, drivers will be stomping the pedal harder than ever before.

The Texas Transportation Commission voted Thursday to adopt a maximum speed limit of 55 mph throughout the eight-county Houston area. The so-called environmental speed limit is intended to reduce concentrations of ground-level ozone in the air. The pollutant is a chief cause of smog, and Houston rivals Los Angeles as the nation's smog capital. The measure was approved 2-0, with Commissioner Ric Williamson abstaining because he owns property on one of the affected roadways.

Ironically, the commission also voted 3-0 to make 86 of the state's 254 counties eligible for a 75-mph limit -- the fastest speed that Texans have ever driven legally in their own state.

The current limit of 70 mph applies to many highways statewide, including several in the Houston area. All 86 counties eligible for the higher limit are sparsely populated, and none is near Houston.

The transportation commission, chaired by John W. "Johnny" Johnson of Houston, sets policy for the Texas Department of Transportation.

The 55-mph limit will apply to Harris, Montgomery, Fort Bend, Galveston, Brazoria, Liberty, Chambers and Waller counties. It is one of several controversial measures scheduled for adoption in Houston as part of the state's plan for meeting federal air quality standards by a 2007 deadline. The plan, which the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency approved in October, also calls for a tougher program to test tailpipe emissions and a drastic 90 percent reduction in industrial emissions of ozone-forming nitrogen oxide.

Air quality models used by state pollution regulators show that at speeds around 55 mph certain kinds of pollutants are at their lowest levels, said Carlos Lopez, director of traffic operations for the transportation department.

"When you drive faster," Lopez said, "the amounts of those pollutants increase," even though one's destination may be reached more quickly.

But skeptics say the reduced speed limit will have little effect on air quality in Houston, largely because much of the vehicular pollution comes from stop-and-go, rush-hour traffic.

In recent years, Houston has rivaled Los Angeles as the metro area with the nation's most severe ozone problem. A network of local monitoring stations showed at least one site exceeded the ozone standards of the federal Clean Air Act on 32 days this year.

These numbers peaked in 1988 at 71 days. The lowest figure was 28 days in violation, recorded in 1996. Under Texas law, the new speed limit will take legal effect on a given stretch of road as soon as the signs there are changed.

"Obey the signs you see" -- regardless of what one may have heard or read, Lopez advised.

Changing the signs will be a big job, he said, because there are more than 4,000 speed limit signs on 1,677 miles of state-maintained highway in the Houston area. The estimated cost is about \$1 million, he said. "That's a lot of road and a lot of signs," said commissioner Robert Nichols of Jacksonville.

Janelle Gbur, the department's Houston spokeswoman, said the work will begin in late January and must be finished by a May 1 deadline under the smog plan.

VII. Other Issues
B. Informational Items

Lopez said the reduced speed limit will also apply to roads maintained by cities and counties, which will change their own signs. The department will coordinate the replacement so motorists won't have to "hopscotch" from one speed limit to another along a route, Lopez said.

This will require careful planning because some Houston area roads fall under several different maintenance supervisors in the transportation department. Interstate 45, for example, passes through five of these zones, Gbur said.

Lopez said the 75-mph limit, authorized this year in legislation sponsored by state Rep. Pete Gallego, D-Alpine, will not be adopted on a given road until the department has done traffic and engineering studies to show such speeds would be safe there.

The higher limit will not apply to 18-wheelers or commercial truckers, and the night speed limit will remain 65 mph. Taking up another controversial issue, the commission authorized six public meetings statewide, including one in Houston Jan. 18, to hear public comment on a new policy against building frontage roads on freeways.

Johnson and Nichols said the issue has brought them more phone calls and letters than any other in their time on the panel.

"There's a lot of concern and fear out there" about the policy's economic effects, Nichols said. Although most states do not have frontage roads, in Texas they are major centers of business activity lined with strip malls, chain restaurants and sprawling car lots.

[HoustonChronicle.com](http://www.HoustonChronicle.com) -- <http://www.HoustonChronicle.com> | [Section: Local & State](#)
[This article is: http://www.chron.com/cs/CDA/story.hts/front/1172365](http://www.chron.com/cs/CDA/story.hts/front/1172365)

EPA Plans 2002 National Compliance Forum in San Antonio

The Environmental Protection Agency posted the following news release on December 21, 2001. The event, to be held in San Antonio, is slated for December 4-6, 2002.

AGENCY PLANS NATIONAL COMPLIANCE FORUM, SEEKS SESSIONS PROPOSALS

Luke C. Hester 202-564-7818 / hester.luke@epa.gov

EPA will sponsor a National Compliance Assistance Providers Forum next December in **San Antonio, Texas**. To prepare for the forum, the Agency is seeking panel discussion proposals by Jan. 18. The forum will provide an opportunity for environmental assistance providers and interested persons in federal, state and local agencies, tribal governments, community groups, nonprofit organizations, academia, private firms and trade associations to share learned lessons and the latest knowledge on compliance tools. The forum will focus on the skills and strengths of environmental assistance providers, the linking of environmental assistance efforts with meaningful incentives and ways to determine program impacts. Further information is available at 202-564-7064 or 202-564-7063. The proposal form can be downloaded by logging onto: <http://www.mng-ltd.com/cfide/website/ncapf02/index1.htm>

URL for above Press Release:

<http://yosemite1.epa.gov/opa/admpress.nsf/b1ab9f485b098972852562e7004dc686/a8d51f4c0f2ddfaf85256b29006943a8?OpenDocument>

Also of note are the related **Summaries from Past Forums** (<http://www.mng-ltd.com/cfide/website/ncapf02/archive/index.htm>), which provides an idea of the substance of previous meetings.

For example, a seven page Executive Summary of the 2001 National Compliance Assistance Providers Forum is available from the Summaries webpage as <http://www.mng-ltd.com/cfide/website/ncapf02/archive/2001/execsum.pdf>. Immediately below are several highlighted topics from that 2001 forum, listed here as an illustration of some of the topics discussed. Please reference the document "execsum.pdf" document, and others, at the Summaries homepage for more details.

CONCURRENT SESSIONS: Compliance Assistance Planning & Priority Setting 1:15 – 3:00 March 7, 2001

Session I: Identify Compliance Assistance Needs to Address EPA and State Air Priorities

- Compliance assistance works best and is most utilized when there is a credible enforcement threat associated with the program. ...

... Session III: Identify Approaches to Address Compliance Assistance Needs and Priorities with States

- Recognize groups/organization/infrastructure that already exist and have been providing a considerable amount of compliance assistance such as the Northeast Pollution Prevention Roundtable and the Pollution Prevention Information System (PPIS). PPIS programs are begging for money and EPA needs to redirect funding so that the PPIS have more resources to do outreach and training. ...

**... CONCURRENT SESSIONS: Compliance Assistance Planning & Priority Setting
3:15 – 5:30 March 7, 2001**

**... Session III: Identify Compliance Assistance Needs to Identify EPA and State
Solid and Hazardous Waste Priorities**

- The public needs to be educated about and engaged in environmental protection. There are a number of tools that can be used as part of this education effort, including the Internet, CD-ROMs, and printed materials. ...

**... CONCURRENT SESSIONS: Tools and Approaches for Delivering Compliance
Assistance 9:00 - 10:45 March 8, 2001**

**... Session I: Integrating Compliance Assistance with Enforcement, Monitoring,
and Other Approaches**

- The term "integrated strategies" means strategies that combine compliance assistance, incentives, monitoring and enforcement. Integrated strategies must be tailored to the nature of the environmental problem or environmental performance issue(s).
- A model for when to provide compliance assistance or use integrated strategies might be effective but how it works should be tested and evaluated. Rather than a model, a menu of approaches that providers could choose from might be more useful.
- Other factors to consider in developing integrated strategies or a model should include:
 - environmental and health risk; quality of life; and pollution prevention potential. Additional factors suggested by other participants include: complexity of the regulation; cost of compliance, including incentives; financial capacity; and economic significance of the regulations. Also, regulatory agencies need to consider small business needs for quick returns on investment as a criterion when considering solutions to environmental problems.

... Session III: Measuring the Results of Compliance Assistance Activities

**CONCURRENT SESSIONS: Focusing Compliance Assistance Resources to
Address Industry Needs 1:30 – 3:15 March 8, 2001**

**... Session I: Strategies for Meeting Compliance Assistance Needs of Small
Businesses and Small Communities**

EPA Releases Project Work Plan for Review of the Ozone NAAQS

Every five years, the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) must be reviewed. The following is the announcement of the work plan for the review of the current revised ozone standard. The previous review, released in July of 1996, was the basis for the 1997 8-hour average ozone NAAQS.

Title: RESEARCH NEEDED TO IMPROVE HEALTH AND ECOLOGICAL RISK ASSESSMENTS FOR OZONE (EPA/600/R-98/031B)

Abstract:

Ozone is one of six criteria air pollutants whose ambient concentrations are regulated under the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) established by the U.S. Clean Air Act (U.S. Code, 1991). The NAAQS apply to both human health (primary standard) and public welfare (secondary standard). Primary standards protect sensitive members of the human population from adverse health effects of criteria air pollutants, with an adequate margin of safety. Secondary standards protect the public welfare from any known or anticipated adverse effects associated with the presence of a pollutant in the ambient air. Welfare effects include but are not limited to effects on soils, water, crops, vegetation, manmade materials, animals, wildlife, weather, visibility, and climate, damage to and deterioration of property, and hazards to transportation, as well as effects on economic values and personal comfort and well-being.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) document Air Quality Criteria for Ozone and Related Photochemical Oxidants (Ozone AQCD) published in July 1996, assembled, summarized, and interpreted available scientific evidence on exposure to, and health and ecological effects of, ambient ozone. Subsequent studies have provided important additional observations. There is clear agreement that short-term ozone exposure produces or promotes significant health effects, not merely temporary physiologic changes. Also, current experimental and epidemiologic evidence provides ample reason for suspicion that long-term ambient ozone exposure induces deleterious human health effects. At the same time, important uncertainties remain in the available health effects database for ambient ozone. This combination of legitimate concern and scientific uncertainty creates a strong case for continued health-related research on ozone, both alone and in combination with other environmental substances.

An ecological risk assessment process has been developed by EPA to assist in evaluating the likelihood that adverse ecological effects may occur or are occurring as a result of exposure to one or more stressors. These assessments are conducted to bring scientific information to bear on risk management decisions. Research conducted to address needs identified in this document will serve as inputs to future risk assessments being developed to characterize ozone effects on ecosystems.

The research needs presented in this document do not constitute a specific research program or research plan. Rather, these needs are intended to provide a broad conceptual context, within which specific research programs and plans can be developed. In this regard, the research approaches mentioned under some specific research needs should not be taken to constitute predictions of specific future requests for proposals issued by U.S. EPA or any other sponsoring organization. Rather, consistent with the broader scope and spirit of this document, the research needs are presented as springboards for further thought and discussion.

Citation:

Additional Information:

December 2001 Second External Review Draft.

The above text is taken from the EPA's website at <http://oaspub.epa.gov/eims/partnQry.detail?dsid=24022&partner=ORD-NCEA>

The December 2001 First External Review Draft, Project Work Plan for Revised Air Quality Criteria for Ozone and Related Photochemical Oxidants, NCEA-R-1068, is available online as

http://oaspub.epa.gov/eims/eimscomm.getfile?p_download_id=4959

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The release of the December 2001 First External Review Draft was accompanied by an announcement of its release in the Federal Register. This December 31, 2001 FR announcement is available online as

http://oaspub.epa.gov/eims/eimscomm.getfile?p_download_id=4960

The December 2001 Second External Review Draft, Research Needed To Improve Health and Ecological Risk Assessments for Ozone, EPA/600/R-98/031B, is available online as

http://oaspub.epa.gov/eims/eimscomm.getfile?p_download_id=4957

The release of the December 2001 Second External Review Draft was accompanied by an announcement of its release in the Federal Register. This December 31, 2001 FR announcement is available online as

http://oaspub.epa.gov/eims/eimscomm.getfile?p_download_id=4958

From the front page of the Project Work Plan for Revised Air Quality Criteria for Ozone and Related Photochemical Oxidants as well as the Research Needed To Improve Health and Ecological Risk Assessments for Ozone documents: "This document is a preliminary draft. It has not been formally released by EPA and should not at this stage be construed to represent Agency policy. It is being circulated for comment on its technical accuracy and policy implications."

Politics New York Times

January 8, 2002

Regulators Urge Easing U.S. Rules on Air Pollution

By KATHARINE Q. SEELYE

WASHINGTON, Jan. 7 — Top federal regulators have recommended informally that the White House relax one of the nation's most contentious air pollution regulations, a provision that requires power plants to upgrade pollution control equipment when they upgrade their operations.

Such a move has long been pushed by energy and industry groups — many of whom have been big supporters of President Bush — who say that current rules impose billions of dollars in extra costs that unfairly block utilities from modernizing to make plants more energy efficient.

Environmental groups have been equally vehement in their support of the current regulations, saying that any relaxation would amount to the biggest rollback of the Clean Air Act since its passage 30 years ago. In addition, the attorneys general from some states in the Northeast, which often bear the brunt of pollution from industrial plants in the Midwest, plan to gather here on Tuesday to protest any changes in the regulations.

While no final recommendations have been formally sent to the White House, officials said that the tentative results of discussions between the Energy Department and the Environmental Protection Agency had been given to the Council on Environmental Quality at the White House. "We have submitted a suggested set of reforms," one official said. "We're pretty far along."

The White House sought a review of the pollution rules in the spring as part of the Bush administration's energy policy. An August deadline was set and missed as internal negotiations intensified, and then the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks shifted the administration's priorities.

Administration officials said the White House was caught between pressure from industry, represented by powerful friends of the administration — including Mark Racicot, whom Mr. Bush recently named chairman of the Republican National Committee — and a concern that a pro-industry decision would revive perceptions by critics that Mr. Bush was a captive of energy interests.

"The White House is getting a lot of pressure from industry," said an administration official, "especially power companies, to make changes along the lines of what Energy is pushing."

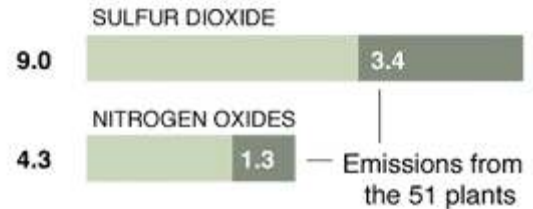
"But they are seeing groups in Congress getting ready to go after their proposal," the official said, "and at this point they're taking a deep breath about whether to go ahead or not."

The rules in question cover reviews of pollution controls that occur when plants expand. Critics say that industries have been avoiding these so-called new-source-review requirements to upgrade their pollution controls by dismissing major investments as routine maintenance. Lawsuits are pending against 51 power plants for violations of those rules.

Dirtiest Power Plants

Fifty-one American power plants, 10 percent of the total, emit a disproportionate amount of pollution and are being sued for violating the Clean Air Act's New Source Review requirements. If the White House relaxes the requirements, these plants may continue unchecked.

Total emissions from 500 plants, 1999
in millions of tons



Source: Abt Associates

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In interagency talks, officials have been considering how to define routine maintenance and at what point new-source-review requirements for more pollution controls should kick in. One idea, for example, proposes that once a power plant spends 5 percent of the worth of its plant, or a refinery spends 8 percent, new controls should be required.

Officials said that Christie Whitman, the administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, has been calling for more stringent requirements than those favored by Energy Secretary Spencer Abraham, as well as by Vice President Dick Cheney and the utility industry. Mrs. Whitman has also sought to link the changes in the new-source-review rules with legislation to reduce emissions of three major pollutants from power plants, officials said.

Spokesmen for the environmental agency and the White House said that no decisions had been reached and that the option of linking changes with legislation was still a possibility.

Joe Martyak, a spokesman for the environmental agency, said, "We are talking about that concept, but there are no specific numbers." For example, Mr. Martyak said, there is a debate over whether the worth of a plant should be based on replacement value or original cost. "The concept is there," he said, "but how to slice and dice it has not been determined."

Scott McClellan, a White House spokesman, said, "We have not received a final report from E.P.A." Any timing on a decision would be speculative, Mr. McClellan said.

Eliot L. Spitzer, the attorney general of New York, said of the recommendations, "This is a cave to the oil and gas industry, and the effect will be a disaster for the environment and the health of those who live in the Northeast, and it will be a boon only to the very narrow interests of the energy industry."

Richard Blumenthal, attorney general of Connecticut, said: "We will sue the administration if it fails to uphold the Clean Air Act, depending on what they do and how they do it. Congress has mandated that these power plants stop polluting the air, and the administration can't simply disregard those legal provisions."

But Scott H. Segal, a lobbyist with Bracewell & Patterson, a Washington law firm representing power companies, said that such criticism was unfounded, and easy for Eastern politicians to make about industries in other states. He said new source review was only one aspect of the rules governing air quality.

"All of these facilities are subject to stringent controls in their air permits," Mr. Segal said. "Nothing related to new-source-review clarification will change those limits."

Of the industry critics, Mr. Segal added: "They don't like old coal-fired plants and they don't like brand new ones, either. And that's wholly irresponsible to the extent that coal is responsible for well over 50 percent of the electric generating capacity in the United States."

Among those pushing the industry's cause are Haley Barbour, the former chairman of the Republican National Committee, and Mr. Racicot, the new chairman, who was a lobbyist at Bracewell & Patterson and said he intended to keep his clients while in his new post. Mr. Racicot has said that he met with Mr. Cheney and Andrew Lundquist, Mr. Cheney's energy director, about new source review.

Mr. Segal said the industries were handicapped by not being able to project with certainty what their costs for pollution controls would be or how much they could expand. But he said he did not favor setting a specific figure at which pollution controls would be required.

Other debates center on how to measure a plant's future pollution, whether by trends in actual emissions or potential total emissions. Now, a refinery can base its normal level of pollution on the last two years; one proposal would allow it to base the level on any year in the previous 10.

Bill Becker, who represents state and local air program administrators, said the administration's openness to discussing changes in the new source review program would have a negative effect in itself on utilities that were in settlement negotiations.

"What is being contemplated are a series of changes that would allow facilities around the country to make significant changes to their operations and increase their pollution level substantially without installing modern pollution controls," said Mr. Becker, who is executive director of the Association of Local Air Pollution Control Officials.

He said his group, which is not unanimously against the new proposals, believed that the Clean Air Act could be improved and had made recommendations to do so. But, he said, "the kind of changes being contemplated now are so different from the kind of recommendations that

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had been under serious consideration as recently as five or six months ago that it makes our support for these very difficult."

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PROPOSED TNRCC LIRAP RULES: MAJOR POINTS

- Only Counties that have implemented a vehicle I/M program are eligible.
- Participating Counties must use 95% of the funds for vehicle repair, retrofit or retirement. No more than 10% of retired vehicles can be used as replacement vehicles.
- Participating Counties must enter into a grant contract with TNRCC for implementation of LIRAP. Counties may assign/contract the LIRAP program to an entity approved by TNRCC.
- Eligible vehicles must have failed an emissions test within 30 days of LIRAP application and must be registered in the participating County two years prior to LIRAP application. Eligible vehicles must be capable of being operated and driven, and must pass the safety portion of I/M, or vehicle owner can provide assurance that actions will be taken to bring the vehicle into compliance with safety requirements.
- Vehicle owner must demonstrate that his or her family income is at or below 200% of the federal poverty level (\$35,300 annually for a family of four). LIRAP income eligibility is based on CHIP eligibility requirements.
- Retirement/scrapage vehicles must have passed a safety inspection within 15 months prior to LIRAP application.
- Authorized LIRAP repairs are between \$50 to \$600 per vehicle, meaning that the vehicle owner is responsible for the first \$50 of repairs. Amounts include diagnostic tests.
- Authorized retirement/scrapage compensation is no less than \$600 to no more than \$1000 per vehicle. Counties may implement a flexible compensation schedule which includes age, mileage, fair-market value, estimated cost of repairs, any amount owner has already spent on repairs.
- Counties must pay repair facilities within 30 days of invoice (which meets the requirements of the County) and vehicles must pass emission and safety tests prior to reimbursement.
- Private firms may purchase eligible vehicles for retirement and receive certified emission credits.
- Federal fleet and government owned vehicles may be retired for certified emission credits.
- Participating Counties must submit quarterly reports to TNRCC. TNRCC is preparing guidance including software for Counties to use to meet this requirement. Participating Counties can appoint a local advisory panel and delegate part or all of the financial administrative matters to the local advisory panel.
- Funding distributed to participating Counties is in proportion to the amount of fees collected.



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE MONDAY, JAN. 14, 2002
TNRCC CALLS FOR INTEGRATED AIR QUALITY EFFORT

Emission Reductions Efforts Should Include Greenhouse Gases

The State of Texas air quality program, which already regulates major sources of emissions, will reduce greenhouse gas emissions, according to a draft report issued today by the Executive Director of the Texas Natural Resource Conservation Commission (TNRCC).

However, the report found that this effort should be improved and expanded.

The draft report from the Executive Director to the three-member Commission recommends an intensive effort to identify which specific air quality measures already in place or scheduled for implementation reduce greenhouse gases most effectively.

"We need to focus on those programs which most effectively reduce greenhouse gases," Saitas said. "And then we need to improve those programs."

Texas has one of the largest and most comprehensive air quality programs in the United States. The draft report found that Texas has an impressive array of measures in place which will be complemented in the next few years by mandates from the Texas Legislature.

The draft report released today is available at the TNRCC Website at www.tnrcc.state.tx.us. It will be discussed by the three-member Commission at its Jan. 18 public work session at the TNRCC's Austin headquarters.

Greenhouse gases commonly refers to a group of compounds including carbon dioxide and methane which generally are not regulated by any state or the federal government, but which may contribute to long-term climate change, or global warming.

A separate group of compounds, including ozone, lead, particulate matter, and toxic substances, are regulated by most states and the federal government.

"Texas does not regulate greenhouse gas emissions, but we already regulate the major sources of greenhouse gas emissions: transportation, industry and power plants," Saitas said. "The most effective course may be to integrate the two efforts, with a continued emphasis on reductions."

The report found:

- Texas, an industrial powerhouse which refines 25 percent of the gasoline in the United States and contains 60 percent of its petrochemical production capacity, contributes about 10 percent of the greenhouse gas emissions in the United States;
- However, those emissions are growing more slowly than the national average. Texas also has a significant number of carbon "sinks," primarily forests, plants, vegetation which naturally absorb carbon dioxide, the primary greenhouse gas. These sinks have never been quantified;
- Ozone reduction plans in Houston-Galveston, Dallas-Fort Worth, Beaumont-Port Arthur and El Paso include or have planned measures which will reduce greenhouse gases, for example energy efficiency requirements for appliances and energy-saving building codes;
- A variety of innovative state laws will reduce greenhouse gas emissions through phasing out of "grandfathered" emission sources, energy efficiency requirements, grants for cleaner heavy-duty vehicles, requirements to capture methane emissions

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from landfills, and state funding for research of cleaner technology (i.e., hydrogen fuel cells already in use);

- Current programs which are known to reduce greenhouse gases, for example pollution prevention and recycling, should be expanded.

***All TNRCC news releases are available at
www.tnrcc.state.tx.us/exec/media/press/***

“Greenhouse Gases: A Report to the Commission,” is available online as
<http://www.tnrcc.state.tx.us/oprd/sips/greenhouse/GreenhouseGases.pdf>