

ALERT!

June 2005

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



CONFORMITY

Rendell Administration Files Suit Against EPA's Mercury Reduction Rule

Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (PennDEP) recently filed a joint lawsuit challenging the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (US EPA) final mercury emissions reduction rule for new and existing coal-fired power plants. The suit challenges US EPA's use of a national "cap and trade" program to regulate the toxic air pollutant.

PennDEP maintains in the lawsuit that the federal administration's mercury proposal is insufficiently protective of public health because a national cap and trade program might produce 'hot spots' of mercury contamination.

Mercury is a persistent, bio-accumulative neurotoxin that endangers pregnant women, children, subsistence fishermen and recreational anglers who are most at risk for health effects that include brain and nervous system damage in children and heart and immune system damage for adults.

Under US EPA's rule, increased emissions are projected in certain states. Upwind plants could continue to pollute by purchasing credits from competitors that reduce pollution. As a result, some parts of the country, including Pennsylvania, could end up on the receiving end of more toxic pollution than others.

In addition, Pennsylvania would be at a competitive disadvantage because US EPA's new emission guidelines are based on the type of coal instead of the class, type or size of the source of emissions. More stringent emissions standards are placed on bituminous coal mined in eastern states like Pennsylvania, Kentucky, Indiana, Illinois, Ohio, Virginia and West Virginia. Little or no reductions are required on units using sub-bituminous coal from the West.

Due to these disparities in the emission standards, owners of coal-fired units that generally burn bituminous coal could comply with the final mercury emissions standards simply by switching fuels. This encourages a shift away from Pennsylvania coal, and will result in a very real and significant economic dislocation for the state's coal industry.



**SAVE
THE
DATE**

Upcoming Air Quality Workshop:

**"REDUCING AIR POLLUTION
TOGETHER"**

Online Registration @

www.state.nj.us/dep/airworkshop/

Wednesday, June 29, 2005 at the
War Memorial Building in Trenton,
New Jersey
9:00 am - 5:00 pm

Delaware Valley Goods Movement Taskforce Meeting Featuring Presentation from "IdleAire" on Truck Stop Electrification

Wednesday, July 20, 2005 at
DVRPC
190 N. Independence Mall West,
(corner of 6th and Race Streets)
8th Floor
10:00 am - 12:00 pm

PennDEP has advocated for mercury to be regulated as a hazardous air pollutant under the Clean Air Act, which requires Maximum Achievable Control Technology (MACT) to reduce emissions.



OTHER NEWS

PennDEP Announces \$30,000 to Help West Chester School District Reduce Diesel Emissions from Buses

PennDEP recently awarded \$30,000 to the West Chester Area School District to purchase and install diesel filters on six school buses to help protect students' health by reducing harmful emissions from particulate matter, hydrocarbon and carbon monoxide. US EPA Region III funded this grant targeted for a diesel retrofit project in southeastern Pennsylvania.

The Krapf Bus Company owns and operates the buses set to be retrofitted with the filters, which reduce particulate matter emissions from diesel sources by at least 85 percent over 150,000 miles. Cleaner-burning ultra-low sulfur fuel is already in use in the school district.

Fine particulate matter emitted from diesel fuel has a diameter of less than 2.5 micrometers, and comes from a wide range of sources, including power plants, cars, buses and even forest fires. These particles can get deep into the lungs and cause significant health problems. PM 2.5 has been determined to be most closely associated with health effects related to increased hospital admissions and emergency room visits for heart and lung disease, increased respiratory symptoms and disease, and decreased lung function.

For more information on the air pollution control program, visit DEP's Web site at www.dep.state.pa.us, Keyword "Diesel Emissions." A link is also provided on these pages to the Philadelphia Diesel Difference Working Group.

PennDEP Denies Sherwin-Williams' Variance From New Air Quality Requirements for Paints and Coatings

PennDEP has denied a request from the Ohio-based Sherwin-Williams Company for a variance from the requirements of new air quality regulations requiring compliance in January to curb the emission of volatile organic compounds (VOCs) in paints and coatings in Pennsylvania.

New architectural and industrial maintenance (AIM) coating standards are now in effect in Pennsylvania and portions of the Northeast and mid-Atlantic regions. The air quality standards establish VOC emission content limits for 48 coating categories, such as paints and primers. The regulation is expected to reduce VOC emissions, a ground level ozone precursor, by an estimated 10,200 tons per year in Pennsylvania. The company may continue to distribute and sell stains manufactured prior to January 1, 2005 but when those supplies are exhausted the company may only sell and distribute stains that meet the new VOC content limit or that are packaged in containers of one liter or less.

ALERT contains news items related to air quality and transportation.

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