

ALERT! *April 2008*

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



CONFORMITY

U.S. EPA Issues Final Revisions to 8-Hour Ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standard

On March 12, 2008, the U.S. EPA announced the final revision to the National Ambient Air Quality Standard (NAAQS) for ground level ozone. This action was the first revision to the ozone standard since 1997 and implements the most stringent ozone standard to date.

EPA lowered the 8-hour ozone standards from 84 parts per billion (ppb) to 75 ppb (averaged over an 8-hour period). Both the primary standard (set to protect human health) and the secondary standard (set to protect public welfare, crops and vegetation) were lowered to the 75 ppb level.

The EPA is required by the Clean Air Act to review the NAAQS every five years. Scientific evidence cited in the latest review of the NAAQS, indicated that the former standard did not sufficiently protect public health and welfare and that a strengthening of the standard was appropriate. EPA's Scientific Advisory Committee recommended that the standard should be lowered to between 60 and 70 ppb, to adequately protect the public. The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection has supported the Committee's recommendations and has expressed disappointment that EPA set the standard higher than (less protective) its own advisory committee's recommendations.

In addition to the NAAQS standard revisions, EPA administrator Stephen Johnson requested that Congress amend the Clean Air Act to allow EPA to consider the costs, benefits, risk trade-offs and feasibility of implementing decisions about how to improve air quality. Administrator Johnson also requested that reviews of the NAAQS be based on available science and prioritization of environmental and health concerns as opposed to the established five year mandatory review schedule. Currently EPA is not supposed to consider the cost of implementing standards in the NAAQS review process.

Along with the strengthening of the NAAQS for ozone, EPA has also changed the Air Quality Index (AQI) to reflect the new standard. The AQI is a color coded graphic designed to convey levels of air quality to the public. The AQI uses the familiar green (good air quality), yellow (moderate), orange (unhealthy for sensitive populations), red (unhealthy for everyone) color scheme to alert the public when air quality is forecast to be poor or unhealthy. An AQI Code Orange now indicates that ozone levels are expected to be between 75 – 95 ppb. A Code Red indicates ozone levels will be greater than 95 ppb.



**SAVE
THE
DATE**

**Monday,
April 21st, 2008
Philadelphia Diesel
Difference
Working Group
10:00 am**

DVRPC Conference Center
8th Floor
6th and Race Streets
Philadelphia, PA

**Air Quality Partnership
Ozone Season Kick-off
Friday April 25th, 2008
10:30 am**

King of Prussia Mall
The Plaza, Lower Level
Lord and Taylor Court
King of Prussia, PA

With the revision to the ozone NAAQS and AQI the Delaware Valley is expected to experience between 35 and 70 Code Orange air quality days, based on historic data. While the number of Code Orange Air Quality days will dramatically increase, it is important to note that air quality in the region is improving.

Currently the DVRPC region is working towards demonstrating attainment of the former 8-Hour Ozone Standard and the EPA is reviewing the attainment State Implementation Plans submitted by Pennsylvania and New Jersey. Under the new standard, EPA is expected to make final non-attainment area designations by the summer of 2010. The DVRPC region will most likely be classified as part of a larger non-attainment area for the new ozone NAAQS. Table 1 includes information regarding the estimated timeline for implementing the revised ozone standards.

Table 1 Estimated Timeline for Revised Ozone Standards	
Date	Action
March 12, 2008	Final standards issued
By June 2010	EPA makes final non-attainment area determinations
2013	State Implementation Plans due
2013 - 2025	States required to meet new standards (based on severity of problem)

For more information on the revised ozone NAAQS please visit:
<http://www.epa.gov/air/ozonepollution/actions.html#mar07s>



TRANSPORTATION – AIR QUALITY

EPA Announces National Clean Diesel Campaign

For fiscal year 2008, Congress has appropriated funds for the first time under the Energy Policy Act (2005) to help reduce harmful emissions from heavy duty diesel engines. Through the National Clean Diesel Campaign, the EPA will award grants to assist its eligible partners in building diesel emission reduction programs across the country that improve air quality and protect public health. The competitive grant programs will be administered through the EPA regional offices in coordination with regional diesel collaboratives. New Jersey is in EPA Region II and is partner to the Northeast Diesel Collaborative (NEDC) while Pennsylvania is in EPA region III and a member of the Mid-Atlantic Diesel Collaborative (MADC). The NEDC also includes EPA Region I.

EPA Regions I and II have approximately \$5.4 million available for grants and innovative financing. In coordination with the NEDC, the regions anticipate funding a combined 6-12 projects ranging from \$50,000 to \$750,000.

EPA Region III has approximately \$3.1 million for the deployment of EPA-verified and certified technologies. EPA Region III anticipates making 5-10 awards ranging from \$200,000 to \$1,000,000.

For more information about the National Clean Diesel Funding Assistance Program please visit: <http://www.epa.gov/otaq/diesel/grantfund.htm>

ALERT! is a DVRPC publication.



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