

ALERT! *May 2008*

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



Health and Air Quality

DVRPC Region Listed in Top 25 Most Ozone and PM_{2.5} Polluted Regions in the Country in the American Lung Association's 2008 State of the Air Report.

The Philadelphia-Camden-Vineland PA-NJ-DE-MD metropolitan region¹ once again was ranked in the top 25 most polluted regions for ozone and fine particles PM_{2.5} by the American Lung Association (ALA) in their *State of the Air* report released in May 2008. The region was ranked as the 11th worst region for ozone pollution and 22nd for short term (24-hour average) PM_{2.5}. The region dropped off the ALA's list of most polluted regions for long term (annual average) PM_{2.5}. The ALA used quality assured data from the period 2004 to 2006 to develop the 2008 report card on ozone and particle pollution for the nation's cities and counties.

The report also ranks individual counties based on the number of days that air quality reaches unhealthy levels (code orange) on the Air Quality Index. Of the eight counties in the DVRPC region that were graded², every county received an "F" grade for ozone pollution, except Delaware County, which received a "D". Camden County, the only county in the region in the top 25 worst counties for ozone, moved from 22nd to 23rd worst.

Three counties received passing grades for short term PM_{2.5} pollution and none of the eight counties received failing grades for the annual PM_{2.5} pollution. Some counties did have inconclusive results for annual PM_{2.5} based on a lack of quality assured data. The ALA used the new PM_{2.5} daily standard of 35µg/m³, adopted in September 2006, to determine the code orange range for short term particle pollution.

The 2008 State of the Air Report shows some surprising changes in the nation's air quality. For the first time, a city outside of California (Pittsburgh) tops the list as the "most polluted" for short term PM_{2.5} pollution. Pittsburgh has risen to second on the list for annual PM_{2.5} pollution. After making modest gains on the list of most polluted cities for ozone in 2007, the Philadelphia Region is ranked the 11th worst city for ozone pollution, but has moved off the list for annual PM_{2.5} pollution. The ALA attributes improvements in air quality to tightening of federal and state regulation on coal fired powered plants and diesel engines but warns that proposed changes to the Clean Air Act could weaken one of the most successful public health laws in the nation's history. When EPA published the new ozone standard in March 2008, EPA Administrator Stephen Johnson proposed changes to the Clean Air Act that would



**SAVE
THE
DATE**

**Friday,
May 2nd, 2008
Opening of Public Comment
Period for PA and NJ
FY 2009 TIPs**

Send Comments to:
Tip- Plan Comments C/O DVRPC
190 N. Independence Mall West
Philadelphia, PA 19106
Or email:
Tip-plan-comments@dvrpc.org

**Tuesday,
May 14th, 2008
Public Information Session
For
FY 2009 PA and NJ TIPs,
Long Range
Plan Amendments and
Conformity Determination
4:00 – 6:00 pm**

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

allow the EPA to consider the cost of implementation when setting or revising the National Ambient Air Quality Standards. This and other proposed changes to the Act are strongly opposed by the ALA.

To view the entire 2008 State of the Air Report, including grading methodology and statistical analysis, please visit the American Lung Association at www.stateoftheair.org.

¹ The Philadelphia-Camden-Vineland PA-NJ-DE-MD metropolitan region includes Philadelphia, Bucks, Chester, Delaware and Montgomery Counties in PA and Camden, Burlington, Gloucester and Salem Counties in NJ.

²Burlington County was not included in the ALA State of the Air Report, presumably due to a lack of data.



[Air QualityPartenrship](#)

Air Quality Partnership Thirteenth Ozone Season Kick-off

The Air Quality Partnership of the Delaware Valley (AQP) held a press conference and kick-off event to announce the beginning of daily ground-level ozone forecasting for 2008. The event was held on Friday April 25th at the King of Prussia Mall in Montgomery County. The mall was chosen as the location of this year's kick-off to highlight the steps that mall management is taking to reduce energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions. The mall has purchased an electric car, sponsored by the AQP, to reduce emissions while patrolling the parking lot and has switched to using energy efficient LED lights in its holiday displays, among other "green" initiatives.

Chester County Commissioner Carol Aichelle presented a first Air Quality Excellence award to Montgomery County in recognition of the county's "Green Print" – Montgomery County's climate change action plan which sets the aggressive goal of reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from the county by 80% below 1990 levels by 2050. Reducing GHG emissions not only conserves resources and energy but also reduces emissions that contribute to ozone and particle pollution.

AQP Vice-Chairperson, Richard Kerr, presented the second Air Quality Excellence award to meteorologist David Murphy and WPVI Channel 6 for their efforts to broadcast the air quality forecast every day during the ozone season over the past three years. This public service greatly expands the reach of the AQP's forecasts and gets the critical information into people's hands that can use it to protect their health from the impacts of air pollution and to take action to reduce emitting activities on poor air quality days.

PA DEP, US EPA, Greater Valley Forge and Chester County TMAs, Clean Air Council and the American Lung Association were on hand to distribute information on ways to reduce air pollution and protect public health to mall shoppers.

To receive advisories when air quality is forecast to be unhealthy, contact the AQP at 800.872.7261 or airquality@dvrpc.org; to view the daily air quality forecast on the web visit: <http://www.airqualitypartnership.org>

ALERT! is a DVRPC publication.



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