

ALERT! *May 2009*

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 2009 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 2009. The region was ranked as the 16th worst region for ozone pollution and 20th for short term (24-hour average) PM_{2.5}. The region stayed 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 2005 to 2007 to develop the 2009 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. Air Quality in Camden County improved and the county was removed from the list of 25 most polluted counties for ozone.

Three counties received failing 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, and the new ozone standard adopted in March 2008 to determine the code orange range for short term particle pollution and ozone.

The 2009 State of the Air Report shows some surprising trends in the nation's air quality. For the second year in a row, a city outside of California (Pittsburgh) tops the list as the "most polluted" for short term PM_{2.5} pollution. Pittsburgh has remained at second on the list for annual PM_{2.5} pollution. The Philadelphia Region is ranked the 16th worst city for ozone pollution, an improvement from last year's 11th, and has remained off the list for annual PM_{2.5} pollution. The ALA acknowledges improvements in air quality across the nation and especially in areas with the toughest air quality issues. The report does warn that increased temperatures and weather pattern changes expected to accompany climate change pose greater challenges to meeting air quality goals.



**SAVE
THE
DATE**

**Friday,
May 22nd, 2009
Opening of Public Comment
Period for Connections 2035
Plan and NJ
FY 2010 TIP**

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

**Thursday,
June 4th, 2009
Public Meeting
For
FY 2010 NJ TIP,
2035 Connections
Long-Range
Plan and Conformity
Determination
4:00 – 6:00 pm**

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

The State of the Air Report highlights six governmental actions aimed at making America's air healthier for its citizens to breathe. The actions range from cleaning up emissions from ocean going vessels to tightening air quality standards even more. The EPA, under the guidance of the Obama Administration, has already begun working on a number of these actions.

To view the entire 2009 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 QualityPartnership](#)

Air Quality Partnership Hosts the 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 2009. The event was held on Saturday April 18th at the Clean Air Council's 5K Run for Clean Air along Martin Luther King Drive. The 5K run was chosen because of the event's history of being well attended and also because it attracts an audience that would be interested in the AQP message. Over 1,700 runners and walkers participated in the event, including a team of 15 from DVRPC.

AQP Board Chairman, John McGee of SEPTA, presented three Air Quality Excellence awards. The first award was presented to Upper Dublin Township in Montgomery County. Upper Dublin was recognized for their efforts to become a Clean Energy Community and for their cooperation with the AQP and Greater Valley Forge Transportation Management Association to fly the Air Quality Alert flag on days when air quality is forecast to be poor. The second award was presented to Al Dia Spanish language newspaper for their contributions to the AQP through donated advertising space as well as the newspaper's efforts to educate the Spanish speaking population of the Delaware Valley about the health effects of ozone pollution. The third, and very special award, was presented to Richard Kerr, former vice-chair of the AQP Board and retired longtime employee of NJ Transit. Richard was active in New Jersey's Ozone Action Program and the AQP since the program's inception in 1997. Richard dedicated many volunteer hours spreading the air quality message and bringing his positive professionalism to the program.

Many organizations including PA DEP, NJ DEP, Philadelphia Air Management Services, ZIP car and SEPTA were on hand to distribute information on ways to reduce air pollution and protect public health to runners and people strolling along the MLK Drive.

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>

<p>ALERT! is a DVRPC publication.</p>	 <p>Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission DVRPC, 8th Floor 190 N. Independence Mall West Philadelphia, PA 19106-1520 Phone 215.592.1800 Fax 215.592.9125 www.dvrpc.org</p>
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