

ALERT! February 2010

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



Conformity

Pennsylvania Releases Philadelphia Region PM_{2.5} Attainment SIP for Public Comment

In April 2005, the US EPA finalized designations of areas not attaining the annual fine particulate matter (PM_{2.5}) National Ambient Air Quality Standard (NAAQS). Philadelphia and the surrounding four counties in Pennsylvania were designated as part of the Philadelphia-Wilmington Annual PM_{2.5} Non-attainment Area. The Clean Air Act requires that the Philadelphia region meet the PM_{2.5} NAAQS by April 2010.

The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) was required by the Clean Air Act to submit a State Implementation Plan (SIP) that demonstrated how the region was going to meet the PM_{2.5} NAAQS by the designated date (April 2010). This SIP submission was due in April 2008 and Pennsylvania has missed that deadline. In November 2009, the EPA filed a "Notice of Failure to Submit" the required SIP and gave the state 18 months to submit the SIP or face sanctions, which would include increased restrictions on emissions in the region.

Pennsylvania DEP has recently completed the PM_{2.5} SIP and is releasing it for public comment as part of the process of submitting the SIP to EPA.

Once the SIP is submitted to EPA and found adequate, the threat of sanctions will be removed. New Jersey and Delaware have already submitted PM_{2.5} SIPs for their portions of the Philadelphia – Wilmington Annual PM_{2.5} Non-attainment area. EPA's approval of these SIPs indicates that the region will meet the Annual PM_{2.5} NAAQS by the designated attainment date of April 2010.

Pennsylvania DEP has scheduled a public meeting to collect comments on the SIP. The meeting will be held at the DEP offices in Norristown, PA on March 11, 2010 at 1:00 pm. DEP will be taking written comments on the SIP until March 12, 2010.



**Monday,
February 8th, 2010
Philadelphia Diesel
Difference
Working Group
10:00 am**

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

**Thursday,
March 11th, 2010
Public Meeting
PM_{2.5} SIP Revision
1:00 pm**

PA DEP Offices
2 East Main Street
Norristown, PA

Written comments should be mailed to the attention of Arleen Shulman, Division of Air Resources Management, Bureau of Air Quality, PO Box 8468, Harrisburg, PA 17105-8468.

To download the PM_{2.5} SIP proposal, please visit PA DEP's website at:
www.dep.state.pa.us/dep/deputate/airwaste/aq/plans/plans/philly25/Philly_plan_rev_12312009.pdf



Air Quality Regulations

Industry and Environmental Advocates Disagree Over Need to Strengthen Ozone Standard at EPA Public Hearing

Industry and environmental groups openly disagreed at a US EPA public hearing over EPA's plans to reconsider the 2008 Ground Level Ozone Standard. The 2008 standard tightened the 1997 ozone standard from 84 parts per billion (ppb) to 75 ppb. EPA is currently investigating lowering the standard even further, to between 60 and 70 ppb, because the previous EPA Administrator set the 2008 standard above what was recommended by the EPA's body of scientific advisors, the Clean Air Scientific Advisory Committee (CASAC). Many public health and environmental advocates felt that the agency should have followed the CASAC's guidance and set the standard at these more restrictive levels.

Industry advocates maintain that the proposed standards would cause great economic harm, encourage manufacturers to relocate to places with less restrictive air quality regulations and drive up energy costs as power plants are forced to invest billions of dollars to reduce emissions to comply with the new standards.

Environmental and public health advocates cite scientific literature that points to adverse health impacts of long-term exposure to lower levels of ozone than were previously thought. Environmental groups also cite the harm to vegetation and ecosystems caused by long-term ozone exposure as justification to tighten the standard.

The current EPA Administrator, Lisa Jackson, stated that EPA intends to use the best science available to strengthen the standards in order to help millions of Americans breathe easier and live healthier. Administrator Jackson intends to issue the final standards by August 2010.

For more information on EPA's plans to revise the 2008 ozone standards please visit: www.epa.gov/groundlevelozone

ALERT! is a DVRPC publication.



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