

# ALERT! *October 2010*

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



## Health and Air Quality

### **National Study Finds Strong Link between PM<sub>2.5</sub> Pollution and Diabetes**

A national epidemiologic study conducted by researchers at Children's Boston Hospital finds a strong, consistent correlation between adult diabetes and particle pollution (PM<sub>2.5</sub>) that persists after accounting for other risk factors such as obesity and ethnicity.

The report, published in the October issue of *Diabetes Care*, is one of the first large, population-based studies to link diabetes prevalence with air pollution. The study is consistent with previous laboratory studies that link insulin resistance to air pollution in experiments on mice.

Investigators reviewed data from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) on PM<sub>2.5</sub> pollution from every county in the contiguous United States for the years 2004 and 2005. The researchers then combined the EPA air pollution data with data from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the U.S. Census Bureau to determine the prevalence of adult diabetes and to adjust for known risk factors such as obesity, geographic latitude, ethnicity and population density ( a measure of urbanization).

The results showed that in all analyses, there was a strong and consistent correlation between diabetes prevalence and PM<sub>2.5</sub> concentrations. The findings showed that for every 10 microgram per cubic meter increase in particle pollution, diabetes prevalence increased by one percent. The researchers point out that since the analysis lacks data on individual exposures, they can not prove causality but the studies do show that PM<sub>2.5</sub> pollution is a significant predictor in all of the research models, even among counties that meet the EPA standards for PM<sub>2.5</sub>.

The researchers note that this study may have policy implications because the results suggest that current EPA limits on PM<sub>2.5</sub> exposure may not be adequate to prevent negative public health outcomes.

For more information on the Children's Boston Hospital study please visit:  
[www.prnewswire.com/news-release/national-study-finds-strong-link-between-diabetes-and-air-pollution-104002478.html](http://www.prnewswire.com/news-release/national-study-finds-strong-link-between-diabetes-and-air-pollution-104002478.html)



**SAVE  
THE  
DATE**

**Friday,  
October 15<sup>th</sup>, 2010  
Odyssey Day  
Alternative Fueled Vehicle  
Showcase**

Temple University  
Ritter Hall Annex  
13<sup>th</sup> Street and  
Cecil B. Moore Avenue  
Philadelphia, PA

**Monday,  
October 18<sup>th</sup>, 2010  
Philadelphia Diesel  
Difference  
Working Group  
10:00 am**

DVRPC Conference Center  
8<sup>th</sup> Floor  
6<sup>th</sup> and Race Streets  
Philadelphia, PA



## Transportation and Air Quality

### EPA and US DOT Propose New Fuel Economy Labels

In an attempt to give the American consumer more information to compare the fuel economy and environmental impacts of purchasing new vehicles, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) have proposed two new fuel economy labels that consumers will see in the windows of new vehicles in dealer showrooms.

On September 23, 2010 the federal agencies opened a 60-day public comment period seeking public input on two new fuel economy label designs. The goal of the new fuel economy labels is to provide consumers with simple energy and environmental comparisons across all types of vehicles including electric vehicles, plug-in electric hybrids and traditional gasoline powered cars and trucks. Information included on the proposed labels will include fuel economy, greenhouse gas emissions, as well as information on smog-forming pollutants. The new labels also provide a link to a web-based interactive tool that can be accessed by a smart phone.



*One version of the proposed fuel economy labels*

The labels will allow comparison of fuel economy and environmental impacts across vehicle types and technologies, such as gasoline powered versus electric vehicles, by translating electricity consumption into miles per gallon equivalents. Labels for electric vehicles will also include information on energy use in terms of kilowatt-hours per 100 miles. Information will only address tailpipe emissions and will not include emissions from electricity generation, transportation, or manufacture of the vehicles.

The EPA and DOT are seeking input on two different label designs. One label design prominently presents a letter grade for the vehicle based on fuel economy and greenhouse gas emission performance. The second proposed label retains the current fuel economy label focus on miles per gallon and annual fuel costs, while updating the design to include more information on fuel economy and emissions.

The new labels are proposed to be included on model year 2012 vehicles.

Designs for the new fuel economy labels can be viewed at: [www.epa.gov/fueleconomy/label.htm](http://www.epa.gov/fueleconomy/label.htm)

On this website the public can interactively view the two proposed labels as well as submit comments on the designs. EPA and DOT will be accepting comments on the designs until November 23, 2010. Comments can also be submitted via email and mail. All comments should reference Docket ID No. EPA-HQ-OAR-2009-0865.

<p>ALERT! is a DVRPC publication.</p>	 <p><b>Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission</b>  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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