

# ALERT! February 2011

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



## Conformity

### US EPA Grants the DVRPC Region a One-year Extension to Meet 1997 Ozone Standard.

On January 21, 2011 the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) published two related final rules in the Federal Register that granted the states in the Philadelphia – Wilmington - Atlantic City 8-Hour Ozone Nonattainment Area, a one-year extension to meet the attainment date (date by which the area must meet the federal health based standard) of the 1997 National Ambient Air Quality Standard (NAAQS) for ground-level ozone. This ozone nonattainment area is comprised of 18 counties in New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, and Maryland and includes the entire DVRPC region.

The EPA granted each of the state's requests for the one-year extension based on quality controlled data that showed that for the 2009 ozone season, the fourth highest ozone monitor value in the region was well below the 1997 NAAQS for ozone, which is 84 parts per billion (ppb). The fourth highest ozone reading, also known as the design value, for all monitors in the region was 74 ppb in 2009.

This extension will give states with counties in the Philadelphia – Wilmington - Atlantic City 8-Hour Ozone Nonattainment Area until June 15, 2011 to meet the 1997 ozone NAAQS. If the extension was not granted the states could have requested that the EPA reclassify the nonattainment area as "serious" from the current "moderate" classification. This reclassification would have resulted in a new attainment date for the nonattainment area and could have resulted in more stringent air quality regulations in order to insure that the region continued to make progress towards attaining the NAAQS.

In order to meet the attainment date, the monitor design values must be below the NAAQS for three consecutive years and EPA must approve the state implementation plans to meet the NAAQS. Under the Clean Air Act, states can qualify for two, one-year extensions of the attainment date.

Even when the DVRPC region demonstrates attainment for the 1997 ozone NAAQS, the region is still expected to be in nonattainment for the new ozone standard which was implemented in 2008 and is currently being reviewed by the EPA. The attainment date for the new ozone standard will be established when the new nonattainment area designations are finalized.



**SAVE  
THE  
DATE**

**Monday,  
February 14, 2011  
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

**Tuesday,  
February 22, 2011  
Air Quality Partnership  
Board Meeting  
10:00 am**

New Jersey Conference Room  
8<sup>th</sup> Floor  
6<sup>th</sup> and Race Streets  
Philadelphia, PA



## Air Quality Regulations

### **New Members of Congress Target EPA's Authority to Regulate Greenhouse Gases.**

Republican leaders in the House of Representatives and Senate have announced plans to challenge the US Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) authority to regulate greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from factories, utilities, and other sources. Legislation that challenges the EPA's finding that GHG endanger human health and the environment were planned to be submitted on February 2, 2011. This EPA "endangerment finding" is essentially the mechanism that gives the EPA the authority to regulate GHGs.

A vote on the House GHG Bill would first occur in the Energy and Commerce Committee, whose chair is an outspoken opponent of EPA's authority. The vote would then be taken on the House floor where Republicans are confident of passing the legislation. There is similar sentiment in the Senate, where Senators Barrasso and Rockefeller have also proposed limiting EPA's authority to regulate GHGs, including a two-year moratorium on new GHG regulations.



## Information

### **Swiss Study Shows that Well Maintained Streets Help Reduce Air Pollution.**

Vehicular traffic is a significant source of fine particle pollution (PM<sub>2.5</sub>) in the air. Vehicle tailpipe emissions are responsible for just under half of the PM<sub>2.5</sub> emissions from transportation. A recent study from the Swiss Federal Laboratory for Materials Science shows that the majority of PM<sub>2.5</sub> emissions from transportation sources is produced by the mechanical wear and resuspension of particles due to the turbulence created by passing vehicles.

The scientists were able to identify the sources of the particles suspended in the air column and found that brake wear was a major contributor to PM<sub>2.5</sub> pollution. In urban areas, due to the stop and go nature of the driving, brake wear can account for up to 20% of the fine particles. Matter from tire wear was not found to be significant.

One significant finding of the study was that intact and well maintained roads contributed relatively less particle pollution than did roads in a poor state of repair. On roads in a poor state of repair, dust and particles from disaggregating road materials becomes more readily resuspended in the air, contributing to fine particle pollution.

*To review the original article as it appeared in Science Daily please visit:*  
[www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2011/02/110201101734.htm](http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2011/02/110201101734.htm)

ALERT! is a DVRPC publication.



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