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dvrpc | June 2013

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



Air Quality Regulations

US EPA Extends Public Comment on Tier 3 Vehicle Emissions and Fuel Standards

In May 2013, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) published a proposed rule in the Federal Register that would reduce the amount of sulfur produced by gasoline from 30 parts per million (ppm) to 10 ppm. According to the EPA, the regulation, known as the Tier 3 Fuel Standard, would not only reduce sulfur emissions, which contribute to fine particle pollution or $PM_{2.5}$, but will also result in significant reductions in nitrogen oxides (NO_x), volatile organic compounds (VOCs) and carbon monoxide (CO). VOCs and NO_x are the major constituents of ozone and CO is a toxic gas in its own right.

The Tier 3 Fuel Standard Rule is facing opposition from the petroleum industry and senators from oil producing states, who claim that the new fuel standard would increase the cost of refining gasoline and that cost increases would be passed on to consumers. The EPA estimates that the new regulation would increase the cost of gasoline by an estimated \$0.01 per gallon. Proponents of the Tier 3 Fuel Standard claim that the rule is a necessary tool to help states meet and maintain the National Ambient Air Quality Standards for ozone and $PM_{2.5}$ and protect public health from air pollution.

In response to industry and public reaction to this proposed rule, the EPA has extended the public comment period on this regulation from June 13, 2013 to July 1, 2013.

The EPA intends to make the Tier 3 Fuel Standard effective by the end of 2013 and contends that the Tier 3 Fuel Standard is an exceptionally cost effective way to reduce emissions from the transportation sector and could help regions meet the new $PM_{2.5}$ Annual Standard which was revised from $15\mu g/m^3$ to $12\mu g/m^3$ in December 2012. The DVRPC region is expected to be designated as a nonattainment area under the new $PM_{2.5}$ standard in late 2014.

Air Quality Partnership

The PA DEP Awards Environmental Education Grant to Air Quality Partnership and GVFTMA Foundation

On April 22, 2013, the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) announced the award of over \$330,000 in Environmental



Save the Date

Wednesday,
June 12, 2013

Connections 2040 Long-Range Plan, FY 2014 New Jersey TIP, and Transportation Conformity Public Meeting

4 – 6 p.m.

Location of Meeting:
Cherry Hill Free Public Library
1100 Kings Highway North
Cherry Hill, NJ

Thursday,
June 27, 2013

Connections 2040 Long-Range Plan and Transportation Conformity Public Meeting

2-4 p.m.

Location of Meeting:
DVRPC Conference Center
8th Floor
6th and Race Streets
Philadelphia, PA



Education and Stewardship grants to 92 schools, non-profit groups and county conservation districts across the Commonwealth. Pennsylvania's Environmental Education grant program was created by an act of the state legislature in 1993 and mandates that 5% of all pollution fines and penalties collected annually by the agency annually should go towards environmental education and stewardship.

The GVFTMA Foundation, in partnership with the Air Quality Partnership of the Delaware Valley, was awarded the \$4,500 grant to assist with the development and design of an air quality awareness and education workbook. The content of the workbook will be developed by a volunteer committee of air quality and public outreach professionals from the AQP Board along with the guidance of a professional educator and curriculum committee member from a local school district.

Content of the workbook will address Common Core States Standards for curriculum in the areas of Health, Safety, and Physical Education and Environment and Ecology so that it will be a useful classroom resource for students and teachers. The workbook will be designed to be downloadable and accessible on the internet so that the materials are available for educators and students across Pennsylvania and beyond. The AQP feels that this workbook will fulfill a real need to communicate information about protecting public health and preventing air pollution to children, using age appropriate language and activities.

The grant period begins in July 2013 and the committee will begin working on the project this summer. It is the goal of the AQP to make this resource available to children and educators by the spring of 2014.



Air Quality Information

US EPA and National Institutes of Health Announce Award for “Conscious Clothing”

On June 4, 2013, the EPA and National Institutes for Health (NIH) announced the winner of the *My Air, My Health Challenge*. The Challenge was a nationwide competition for innovators to design a small, low cost sensor that collects air quality measurements and related health data, such as heart rate and breathing. The EPA and NIH assert that this type of innovation will help the agencies to better understand the impacts of air pollution in real time.

The winning team of designers was awarded \$100,000 for developing “Conscious Clothing”, a wearable real-time breathing analysis tool that calculates the amount of polluted air that a person inhales. Estimates of pollution exposure result from how deeply the person breathes and how much pollution is in the air. The data is then transmitted to any Bluetooth-enabled device such as a cell phone.

These devices will make it possible for researchers to correlate physiological reactions to pollutant levels and physical activity. The devices will help researchers to document the relationships between varying levels of chemical exposure and individual health responses. Data collected from the devices will assist public health professionals in making health recommendations regarding activity levels and safe exposure to varying levels of air pollution, as well allowing researchers to collect more specific temporal and geographic data on air pollution concentrations.

For more information on the *My Air, My Health Challenge*, please visit: www.epa.gov/research/challenges.



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