

Ozone Season Off to an Unusually Warm Start

The summer ozone season for the Front Range started June 1 and has been followed by unseasonably high temperatures. With these record-breaking temperatures, abundant sunshine, little moisture and light winds, conditions have been ripe for ozone formation this summer.

Through July 24, the region has experienced six days with elevated ozone levels above the federal limit of 85 parts per billion (ppb) – two in June and four so far in July. During a three-day stretch from July 13-15, when temperatures soared above 100 degrees, ozone levels crept above 90 ppb. Several other days had ozone readings above 80 ppb.

Despite the higher than normal levels of ozone so far this summer, the region is still below the federal standard for ozone pollution, which takes into account the influence of extreme weather conditions. The region is on track for complying with the ozone standard by the end of 2007 as called for in the Ozone Early Action Compact. However, with a month left in the ozone season, conditions could change, though ozone levels historically have been more moderate as the summer winds down. Check the RAQC's web site for an up-to-date accounting of ozone monitoring data this summer.

The Regional Air Quality Council (RAQC) continues to educate citizens, local governments, businesses, nonprofits, and other interested parties about ways individuals and organizations can help reduce ozone pollution. Elevated ground-level ozone pollution has health, environmental, and regulatory impacts and the RAQC continues its dedication to education and outreach.

Along with the the continuation of paid advertising, media outreach and education, public outreach and events, and local government outreach, the RAQC is focusing on deepening the understanding of the issues and attempting to motivate people to voluntarily change behaviors and activities that contribute to ozone formation.

First, the RAQC worked with the Greater Metro Telecommunications Consortium – an association of local governments working together on cable-related issues – on the production of a 30 minute educational program on ozone. Now airing on Comcast on-demand and municipal cable access

stations throughout the region, the video features an in-depth look at how ozone is formed, how it affects public health and environment, and the simple things individuals can do to reduce the negative impact.

Secondly, the RAQC and its partners developed the "Summer Chill" campaign to encourage voluntary changes in behavior. The campaign asks citizens to take a pledge to chill this summer on hot days and avoid those activities – such as driving, mowing, and engaging in home improvement projects – that contribute to ozone pollution. Individuals can pledge online at www.OzoneAware.org or fill out print pledges that are passed out at events. At the end of June, nearly 200 people took the pledge to drive less, mow in the evening, and/or refuel in the evening. By asking people to take a pledge, it will establish a sense of commitment which will hopefully translate to positive behavior change on hot summer days.

You can help reduce activities that contribute to ozone by taking the pledge to chill on hot summer days. Visit pledge.OzoneAware.org.

For more information on the RAQC's voluntary ozone outreach program, visit OzoneAware.org or call (303) 629-5450. ■

Diesel Collaborative Plans for Fall Workshop

The newly formed Rocky Mountain Clean Diesel Collaborative is planning an interactive and educational diesel workshop for this fall.

The Collaborative is made up of representatives from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Region 8 office, Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, City and County of Denver, and Regional Air Quality Council (RAQC).

The Collaborative was formed to discuss ways in which the partners can leverage funding to utilize and administer cleaner burning technologies, alternative fuels, and idle reduction practices in order to reduce harmful diesel emissions in the Rocky Mountain region. Through efforts and funds from federal, state, and local governments, the Collaborative's focus is to reduce emissions from diesel fleets and school buses, as well as non-road sources, resulting in improved

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LOCAL GOVERNMENT HIGHLIGHT

As part of the “Let’s Take Care of Our Summer Air” summer ozone outreach and education campaign, the Regional Air Quality Council (RAQC) partnered with the Greater Metro Telecommunications Consortium (GMTC) to create a 30-minute informational ozone video to air on all local government cable access stations throughout the metro area.

The video is one of the RAQC’s most important components to its educational efforts this summer.

The video will help deepen the understanding of the complicated issue of ozone including what ozone is, how it is formed, the health impacts, and small things citizens can do to help reduce ozone pollution.

The video will air throughout the summer on the municipal cable stations as well as on Comcast on-demand and as part of their Metro Beat TV series. For listing times in your area, consult your local government or local TV guide. ■

REGIONAL COLLABORATION

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regional health and air quality. Using the model of similar organizations around the country, the Collaborative

hopes to expand upon its stakeholder base to include more members and projects over time.

The first project the Collaborative will work on is the workshop, scheduled for November. The RAQC hosted a similar conference in 2002 that was attended by over 100 public and private fleet operators. Partners hope to double attendance at the Fall workshop.

This year’s workshop will highlight general information for all diesel fleets as well as individual break-out sessions to be led by field experts that will focus on specific sectors such as construction and off-road, school buses, and general on-road equipment. Partners also hope to educate fleet managers and operators on available funding opportunities and connect them with resources that will help improve business practices to make them more efficient and cost-effective. Plans also include a grant-

Following the passage of House Bill 1302 during the 2006 Colorado Legislative Session, state and regional air authorities are planning a stakeholders meeting to begin discussions on expanding the use of remote sensing, including the development of a full-scale high-emitter program.

The meeting is planned for Monday, July 31 and will cover topics such as the requirements of the legislation and timelines for implementation as well as updates on state implementation plan provisions, RapidScreen and Repair Your Air programs, and remote sensing studies.

The legislation was passed with bipartisan support and mandates in part an increase in the use of the RapidScreen remote sensing devices to exempt those vehicles that meet clean air criteria from having to obtain an emissions test at a station. In addition, the bill requires the development of a high-emitter program similar to the Regional Air Quality Council’s (RAQC) Repair Your Air Campaign.

A plan for the implementation, including a timeline, is due to the Colorado Air Quality Control Commission at the end of the year.

For meeting details, visit the RAQC’s web site at www.raqc.org. ■

writing workshop, and a session on leveraging funding to aid participants in getting the most out of their time and effort. Idling reduction will also be emphasized at the workshop as it continues to gain in importance throughout fleets across the country as a way to save money.

Details about the conference will be available in the coming months on the RAQC’s web site at www.raqc.org as well as the Collaborative’s web site at www.epa.gov/region08/air/rmcdc.html. ■

Air Agencies to Discuss Expanding the use of Remote Emissions Testing

Upcoming Meetings:

July 27

Reg. 7 Stakeholder Mtg.

July 31

HB1302 Stakeholder Mtg.

August 17

AQCC Meeting

September 7

RAQC Board Meeting

Helpful Contacts:

RAQC:

(303) 629-5450

State’s Air Pollution Control Division:

(303) 692-3100

Air Quality Hotlines:

(303) 758-4848 or

(303) 782-0211

Reminders:

The summer ozone season started June 1.

Please take the pledge to chill on hot summer days and avoid those activities that cause ozone.

Remember:

- mow in the evening or replace your gas-powered mower with an earth friendly one

- limit driving by combining errands

- refuel after 5 p.m.

- don’t idle; turn off the engine

- visit the web site at OzoneAware.org to enter your pledge

www.raqc.org