

NETWORK NEWS

Citizens in Dayton, Cleveland, Atlanta, New York City, Buffalo, and Washington DC Participate in PPA Community Based Ozone Monitoring Project

Despite the health risks, citizens do not have sufficient information about the extent to which ground-level ozone is a problem in their own neighborhoods. By collecting information on local ozone levels, residents and local environmental leaders aim to -

- determine how different populations may be affected by ozone;
- enable residents to take steps to better protect their own health; and
- ensure that efforts to reduce ozone are sufficient.



This past summer, residents in six communities in the Great Lakes area and around the United States measured the concentration of ground-level ozone (also known as smog) in their neighborhoods. The purpose of this citizen ozone monitoring network is to collect ozone data that are otherwise not available on a localized level to empower the public to advocate for better monitoring and pollution controls. State and regional agencies, with guidance from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), currently monitor ground-level ozone concentrations using highly sophisticated equipment. In some areas of the country, however, the number of monitoring

stations is limited. About a third of the U.S. population lives in communities without ozone monitors¹; however, even in areas where ozone monitoring is done, data on localized differences are not available. The data collected by government agencies does not capture variations in ozone levels within the area.

¹ *State of the Air: 2001*. American Lung Association. www.lungusa.org/air2001/download/SOTASTAT.pdf

The citizen ozone monitoring network started in the summer of 2000 in Cleveland, Ohio. Citizens in six neighborhoods took daily readings for four weeks in August and September. This year, the network has been expanded and now includes over 30 monitors in Cleveland, as well as 10 monitors in Dayton, Ohio, 8 monitors in Buffalo, NY, 25 monitors in Atlanta, Georgia, and 2 monitors in Washington DC and New York City.

Environmental Defense works closely with local partners and community groups to develop the citizen monitoring networks in these cities.

For the second year in a row our ozone monitoring efforts have shown variation in ozone levels within each city. This variability is potentially significant since (1) ozone is considered to be a regional, not local problem; and (2) many of the cities in our Network and around the Great Lakes are border-line “non-attainment” areas under current EPA air quality regulations for ground-level ozone and are above more stringent health standards that will be implemented in 2002. As local authorities craft plans to reduce ozone to acceptable levels, there is an opportunity for environmental and health groups to push for measures that address local variation. For information about the project, ozone issues in your community, or to find out how to get involved visit <http://www.formyworld.com/ozone>, or contact Carol Andress at Environmental Defense at candress@environmentaldefense.org, 202-387-3500.

The Pollution Prevention Alliance (PPA) joins Environmental Defense with regional, state, tribal, and community-based activists working to promote pollution prevention and sustainable communities in the Great Lakes region. PPA is supported by The Joyce Foundation, The Energy Foundation, and The George Gund Foundation.

The PPA Newsletter is published quarterly by Environmental Defense's PPA staff. Readers are encouraged to submit materials for publication. We reserve the right to edit all submissions for length and clarity. Please send all submittals to:

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Preserving and Enhancing Public Right-to-Know

In September, we joined industry and other groups to ask EPA to make reform of environmental information policy, management, and systems a top priority. Specifically, the letter urged EPA to establish a whole facility data collection, reporting, and dissemination system that integrates various reporting requirements and databases to make it easier for the public and industry to understand the total environmental impact of a facility. This letter is a significant accomplishment because it demonstrates common ground with industry on the importance of improved information reporting and management.

Since September 11th, government agencies have been closing the door on access to public information. Several government agencies have removed critical information on chemical facilities from their websites in a way that threatens, rather than secures, our national safety. Additionally, numerous bills proposed in the Senate (including bills on energy security and bioterrorism) include provisions that could close down public access to critical information about health and safety. In response, Environmental Defense and other NGOs sent a letter to Senator Daschle and House Speaker Hastert asking that Congress balance efforts intended to prevent terrorism with the needs and rights of the American people for information they need to make decisions about reducing risks, eliminating hazards, and protecting their families.

At the same time, the groups are working on a letter to President Bush, asking him to direct federal agencies to review publicly available data for national security risks in an open process that includes the input of stakeholders. We hope both actions will result in a reasoned and balanced approach to right-to-know issues.

For more information about current legislative or administrative activity impacting public right-to-know issues, contact Carol Andress at candress@environmentaldefense.org, 202-387-3500.

Clean Car Campaign and 26 NGOs Urge Automakers to Remove Toxic Mercury From Vehicles



On July 2, 2001, the Clean Car Campaign sent letters to the heads of Ford, DaimlerChrysler, and GM asking the auto industry to remove toxic mercury from vehicles in for service, repair, or recall at their dealerships. This letter was signed by 26 environmental and health organizations from across the country, thus showing broad support for a manufacturer-responsibility solution to this mercury problem.

The Campaign also promoted a similar call by 26 state attorneys general urging

Ford to remove mercury-containing devices as part of their Firestone tire recall. The Attorney Generals' letter was sent to Ford's Chairman and CEO (William Clay Ford, Jr. and Jacques Nasser) asking the company to replace mercury lighting switches in vehicles recalled to replace Firestone tires. The Attorney Generals' recommended replacements would prevent the release of 2.5 tons of mercury to the environment from Ford vehicles/trucks.

Mercury is a potent toxic chemical that causes brain, lung and kidney damage in humans, particularly children. Pure liquid mercury has been used in switches for hood and trunk convenience lighting, and in other devices, becoming a contaminant when vehicles are scrapped. At this time automotive devices containing mercury are not captured when vehicles are retired and recycled. Through the vehicle recycling process the mercury is presumed released into the environment. The Campaign estimates that nearly 10 tons of mercury is released into the environment from automotive sources each year.

Despite growing concerns about the fate of mercury devices now contained in automobiles, very little has been done to date to rectify the problem, and automakers have generally pushed the problem off on auto dismantlers and others in the automobile recycling business. To help address this problem and promote manufacturer responsibility, the Campaign has teamed up with the Automobile Recyclers Association, the Institute of Scrap Recycling Industries, Inc., and others to form the Partnership for Mercury-Free

Vehicles. Together, these environmental groups and industry representatives are promoting a common action plan that calls on automakers to eliminate mercury from new cars and trucks and to collect and properly manage mercury contained in the vehicles already on the road. The Partnership is actively promoting this plan in states that are introducing mercury-containing product legislation (e.g., Maine, Massachusetts), and exploring opportunities at the national level to do the same.

Breaking News!

On November 13, 2001, the Clean Car Campaign in coordination with auto dealerships and local officials kicked off a series of "Switch-the-Switch" events across the country to remove toxic mercury from vehicles currently on the road. Participating dealerships replaced mercury convenience lighting switches with mercury-free alternatives in customer vehicles for free and state and city officials replaced mercury switches in government vehicle fleets. For more information about "switch-the-switch" visit www.cleancarcampaign.org/switch_the_switch.html or to learn how to organize an event in your community contact Dean Menke at dmenke@environmentaldefense.org.

In its annual corporate responsibility report, Ford credited the Clean Car Campaign for its decision to phase out mercury switches in a timely fashion. "In early 2001, several non-governmental organizations issued a report about the use of mercury in the auto industry and the problems it can pose at a vehicle's end of life... In 2000, we eliminated ABS G-sensor switches using mercury and will phase out mercury-containing convenience light switches by the end of 2001." (2000

Corporate Citizenship Report) This commitment is impressive considering that Ford used more mercury switches than General Motors and DaimlerChrysler combined, in model year 2000. General Motors and DaimlerChrysler have been less receptive; GM will phase out its use of mercury switches by 2004, and DaimlerChrysler claims it will continue using mercury switches in its Jeep Cherokee until 2006.

For more information about the Campaign, contact Dean Menke at Environmental Defense, 202-387-3500, dmenke@environmentaldefense.org.

As part of our ongoing efforts to improve the PPA Newsletter we have decided to concentrate our reporting on the community-based monitoring and clean vehicle technology issues that PPA staff are actively involved in. We feel that by focusing the newsletter on our areas of expertise we will be able to provide more valuable and timely information to our readers. Let us know what you think.

MONITORING PROJECTS AND RELATED NEWS

Real Time Data Available on AirBeat Website

AirBeat, a pilot project sponsored by the US Environmental Protection Agency specifically for the community of Roxbury in Boston, provides realtime data on the AirBeat website and hotline. Most of the data for AirBeat comes from a new air monitoring station and provides communities with information about the day's air quality. This information enables residents of

Roxbury to protect their own health by knowing when to expect unhealthy levels of air pollution.

The project is funded by the EPA through the Environmental Monitoring for Public Access and Community Tracking (EMPACT) program. The purpose of EMPACT is to make timely environmental information available to communities in a format that is useable and easy to understand allowing people to make informed decisions that can protect their health and the environment. For more information about the AirBeat and to see the data, visit <http://www.airbeat.org>.

Southwest Organizing Project Urges Companies to Monitor Air in Neighboring Communities

The Southwest Organizing Project (SWOP), a community based group in New Mexico, urges Intel to place air monitoring equipment in the communities most at risk of breathing the chemical compounds they are releasing. Current methods of monitoring focus on measuring what is coming out of smokestacks, but there is no tracking to see where they are going.

With limited government air monitoring, SWOP proposes that air monitoring in the communities surrounding the facility be done in three basic steps by the polluting company, including collection, analysis, and reporting.

- **Collection:** SWOP states that the air must be collected for analysis, however, the type of analysis

determines how the air sample must be collected.

- Analysis: The SWOP proposal is limited to two types of analysis, on-site infrared gas spectrometer, and laboratory analysis.
- Reporting: SWOP states that the results of the analysis must be made available on a website and e-mailed to interested parties.

For information about SWOP, visit www.swop.net, or contact SWOP at 505-247-8832, swop@swopnet.

NALGEP Launches Profiles of Local Clean Air Innovation

In August, 2001, the National Association of Local Government Environmental Professionals (NALGEP) released a report called *Profiles of Local Clean Air Innovation, Empowering Communities to Meet the Air Quality Challenges of the 21st Century*. The report includes 20 profiles of local governments that are taking action to improve air quality through smart growth, clean energy, transportation choice, and pollution prevention.

NALGEP convened a Clean Air Task Force of 32 of the nation's leading local environmental officials and interviewed more than 85 local environmental, economic development and transportation officials from across the country. From these ideas NALGEP developed 10 recommended actions for promoting community-based air innovation through new partnerships between government, the private sector, and nonprofit organizations. One recommended action is that the EPA

establish a "National Clean Air Showcase Communities" pilot program that provides grant funding, staff, technical assistance and federal resources to support innovative air quality initiatives in a number of local governments. Another recommended action is that each EPA office designate a "Clean Air Community Liaison" to provide technical assistance and outreach. The report also emphasizes the need for alternative fuel stations at government facilities and other locations to increase visibility and use.

Several conclusions also emphasize the need for local officials to implement innovative community-based approaches that complement traditional Clean Air Act controls. For example, state and federal to establish regional air partnerships to coordinate air monitoring, planning and control measures across metropolitan regions with common air pollution issues. Other needs include EPA providing regulatory credit to communities implementing innovative air quality practices and the need for improved tools to measure the benefits of practices such as smart growth, clean energy and transportation, and public outreach.

Communities that have implemented creative strategies for improving air quality are highlighted in the report. Examples of these projects include the partnership with small business in Boulder, CO and the Miami-Dade County effort to plant trees to reduce carbon dioxide emissions. Copies of the report can be purchased online at www.nalgep.org or by calling 202-638-6254.

CLEAN CAR CAMPAIGN AND RELATED NEWS

Alternative Fuel Vehicles in Northeast Ohio

The Northeast Ohio Clean Fuels Coalition, a project of Earth Day Coalition, held a Clean Fuel Choice event this past summer. The seminar focused on how and why fleet managers should use alternative fuels. Speakers addressed issues around airport fleets, including shuttles, taxis and airport maintenance vehicles.

With assistance from Earth Day Coalition, two members of the Northeast Ohio Clean Fuels Coalition were awarded grants from the US DOE's State Energy Program to increase their numbers of alternative fuel vehicles. The Sisters of St. Joseph were awarded funds to purchase four Honda Civics that run exclusively on compressed natural gas and Cleveland based Americab will receive a grant to convert their fleet to 100 percent alternative fuel. For information on the Northeast Ohio Clean Fuels Coalition, or for assistance in applying for a State Energy Program grant, contact Clean Cities Coordinator, Stephanie Strong of Earth Day Coalition at 216-281-6468, or sstrong@earthdaycoalition.org.

In October, the Clean Car Campaign published Volume II of DRIVING FORWARD, a newsletter geared toward the auto industry and the media. This volume entitled "Pick Up The Pace" discusses the types of improvements that auto manufacturers can make to improve pickup truck fuel economy and reduce air pollution, without sacrificing high-level performance. To view Driving Forward, visit <http://www.cleancarcampaign.org> or <http://www.greencar.org>, or contact Tom Murray at Environmental Defense, 202-387-3500, tmurray@environmentaldefense.org.

NRDC and the Coalition for Clean Air Promote Anti-Diesel Campaign

The Natural Resources Defense Council and the Coalition for Clean Air embarked on a collaborative anti-diesel campaign combining litigation, advocacy, and education about the hazards of diesel, along with information about cleaner alternatives. The initiative is designed to decrease the use of diesel-powered vehicles, with the resultant improvement in air quality. Shifting cleaner fuels would mean cleaner air and reduced health impacts on communities located near major sources of diesel emissions.

The campaign works to decrease our dependence on diesel vehicles. The initiative includes:

- Air monitoring in communities near major sources of diesel exhaust to determine the risk posed by these sources;
- Litigation against companies that are violating California's Proposition 65 by exposing their workers and/or communities to levels of diesel exhaust that pose a significant risk,
- Education of private companies, public transit agencies and governmental entities about clean fuel alternatives-and pressuring those entities to switch to cleaner fuels;
- Community outreach to residents near diesel 'hot spots' to educate them about the associated health problems and to assist them in taking steps to protect themselves from these serious health threats.

For information about the Campaign, contact NRDC at 212-727-2700.

RESOURCES

The Bucket Brigade Manual

Communities for a Better Environment's "Bucket Brigade Manual" provides background information about community based air sampling and describes how to build a Bucket Brigade in your community. For more information, or to obtain a copy, contact Communities for a Better Environment at 415-243-8373, cbesf@igc.org.

Air CURRENTS

Air CURRENTS (Collaboration of Urban, Rural and Regional Environmental Networks of Teachers and Students) is a curriculum designed for middle and high school math, science and social studies classes to educate students about air pollution and air monitoring techniques. The goal of the project is to integrate environmental learning into core curricula, engage students and teachers in scientifically meaningful air monitoring projects and work with schools to aid in developing a community understanding of local environmental problems. Information and copies of the curriculum are available at www.aircurrents.org or by contacting Ginger Lawrence at the Northeast States for Coordinated Air Use Management (NESCAUM) at (617) 367-8540.

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