

# Air and Climate Public Advisory Committee

Suite 300, 777 North Capitol Street, N.E. Washington, DC 20002-4239 ☎ (202) 962-3360 ☎ Fax: (202) 962-3203

<http://www.mwcog.org/environment/committee/>

The Air and Climate Public Advisory Committee (ACPAC) is an advisory body to the Metropolitan Washington Air Quality Committee (MWAQC) and the Climate, Energy, and Environment Policy Committee (CEEPC)

Draft Meeting Minutes  
Monday, December 9, 2013  
Room 1  
5:30 P.M.-7:30 P.M.

**ACPAC Members:** Sarah Bunn, Bill Butler, Ed Comer, Brian DiNunno, Andrew Kambour, Brian McFarland, Ravindra Gupta, Caroline Petti, John Reed, Glenna Tinney

**Staff:** Joan Rohlf, Jeff King, Sunil Kumar, Isabel Ricker

**Speakers:** Marchant Wentworth, Wentworth Green Strategies

## 1. Call to Order, Adoption of Agenda, Approval of Minutes (Caroline Petti, Chair)

The agenda and minutes from November 18, 2013 were approved with no changes.

## 2. Renewable Portfolio Standards (Marchant Wentworth, Wentworth Green Strategies)

Mr. Wentworth gave a presentation on Renewable Portfolio Standards (RPS) or Renewable Energy Standards (RES) and their importance for promoting renewables as part of the energy mix. RES are a legal requirement that a certain percentage of electricity provided by retail sellers of electricity be generated by renewable energy resources, such as wind, solar, geothermal, biomass, etc.

Utilities purchase Renewable Energy Credits (RECs) in order to meet the standard if they cannot meet it with installed capacity. In 2012, 79% of the money used to meet the RES in MD and DC was used to purchase RECs from “black liquor”. Black liquor is a waste product from paper production, and is included as a biomass source in MD and DC’s RES. There is currently a push to close this loophole and remove black liquor from the list of eligible “renewable” energy sources. DC Councilmembers Mendelson and Cheh have introduced a bill to do this and held a hearing on October 16. Maryland may also do so in 2014. Chesapeake Climate Action Network has estimated that closing the loophole will double renewable energy production by 2020.

Mr. Wentworth answered questions about black liquor including how the REC purchase system worked for black liquor versus other renewables and why it was included as a biomass source in the first place. Mr. Wentworth explained that there are two tiers: tier one includes solar, wind, biomass (and black liquor); tier two includes waste energy. The DC and MD bills would change what qualifies under the tiers, not the percentage required. Mr. Wentworth also explained that in 2005 this was a necessary evil in order to get industry to agree to the bill. Mr. Wentworth said no one is quite sure how expensive it would be to meet the standard without black liquor.

A question was asked regarding whether RES have actually helped to increase the amount of renewable energy generated in a state, if you can buy RECs from elsewhere. This is a complex question because it depends on whether the generation company retires the RECs, or sells them to the retailer. Selling the RECs is responsible for most of the profit these companies see, but therefore the power generated there doesn't necessarily increase the demand for renewables.

There are two bills that are likely to be proposed to strengthen the RES in Virginia, which the CEEPC Advocacy committee will be working on this spring. There may be opportunity for ACPAC members to get involved in this advocacy, such as going to Richmond for public comment hearings, if there is interest.

### **3. Diesel Distributed Generators (Sunil Kumar, COG DEP Staff)**

We usually think of auxiliary diesel generators as emergency generation, such as for hospitals or in power outages. However, there is a growing trend to use them as a supplemental power source for peak shaving or demand response. This means that they are often used on the hottest days when electricity rates are highest, and ozone is worst. The generators produce many air pollutants and make the ozone problem much worse.

The Ozone Transport Commission, a multi-state organization created under the Clean Air Act, has been studying this issue and Maryland did pass reporting requirements for Curtailment Service Providers to help determine the extent of the problem, so there will be data but currently there is only one year worth. COG staff will continue to update the committee if and when there are new developments.

### **4. State and Local Clean Air Measures (Jeff King, COG DEP Staff)**

The Gold Book is a compendium of voluntary measures taken by local measures to improve air quality in the Metropolitan Washington region. The State Implementation Plan (SIP) the region prepares for EPA contains enforceable and quantifiable measures that the states are obligated by law to uphold. Therefore, states tend to include state-level measures. The Gold Book documents other things going on at the local level that did not necessarily make it into the SIP but are good for air quality.

The previous Gold Book was completed in 2009. COG is currently undertaking a revision and is seeking ACPAC's feedback on measures that should be included as well as ways to help local governments implement these and make traction on air quality measures. Here is a compilation of the ideas put forward by ACPAC:

Measures Local Governments Should Implement to Improve Air Quality:

- cleaner fuels for airport vehicles (e.g., people movers, luggage transport, etc.)
- programs for reducing residential parking adjacent to transit centers
- programs for improving tree health and increasing tree canopy coverage
- programs for protecting and expanding parks and green space
- energy balance studies

- promoting nuclear power because it's low-emitting
- emissions from the whole nuclear fuel cycle (mining, milling, enrichment, fabrication, etc.) should be considered before promoting nuclear power
- facilitating commuter connections through Apps which allow commuters to connect with one another
- expanded Bus Rapid Transit
- emphasis on cleaner vehicle fleets
- reducing emissions from emergency, peak-shaving, and demand-response diesel generators
- better enforcement of anti-idling regulations

Things That Can Be Done to Help Local Governments with Air Quality:

- identify air quality opportunities to elected and newly-elected public officials
- better communication about the important health benefits of improving air quality
- provide incentives to hospitals to provide admissions data for studying the effects of high pollution days on health

**5. Adjourn. Happy Holidays! See you in the New Year!**

**Next meeting: January 13, 2013 – 5:30pm – 7:30pm**