

Discussion Draft for February 8, 2022 MWAQC TAC Meeting

February 2022 Charge to the Metropolitan Washington Air Quality Committee (MWAQC) Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) to investigate and make recommendations on new emission reduction programs to ensure that public health is protected and that environmental justice issues are addressed

The MWAQC directs the MWAQC Staff and the MWAQC TAC to investigate and make recommendations on new emission reduction programs that can be implemented to better protect public health. Additional emission reductions will help reduce risk from exposure to ground level ozone or smog and fine particulate air pollution. These reductions will also begin to address potential inequitable exposures to air pollution in communities with concerns over environmental justice.

A report to MWAQC from MWAQC TAC, that makes recommendations on short term emission reduction opportunities and proposes a longer-term schedule for analyzing other emission reduction opportunities, is due on July 1, 2022.

MWAQC TAC must consider the following emission reduction opportunities as it works to identify the short-term emission reduction programs that can be implemented by state and local MWAQC jurisdictions or the federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA):

- Programs or enforcement efforts to reduce illegal tampering of vehicles. Significant nitrogen oxide (NO_x) and fine particle reductions can be achieved. NO_x is the key emission that creates ozone. This type of effort is already being implemented in parts of the MWAQC region.
- A voluntary partnership program with the owners of energy generation sources to minimize emissions on critical days when ozone is likely to be high. Because these days are also high electricity demand days, energy generation sources have higher than average emissions. Significant emission reductions can be achieved. This type of effort is already being implemented in parts of the MWAQC region.
- Efforts to compel EPA to require coal-fired power plants in Pennsylvania and West Virginia to use existing control technologies to minimize NO_x emissions on bad ozone days. Sources in these states are regulated under the federal cap-and-trade program which allows much higher emissions on some days if average emissions meet a long-term emissions cap. Analysis indicates that if control technologies in just Pennsylvania are optimized every day that up to 30 tons per day of NO_x reductions can be achieved.
- Programs or enforcement efforts to reduce emissions from illegal idling of diesel vehicles. Significant NO_x, fine particle and air toxics emission reductions can be achieved. This type of effort is already being implemented in parts of the MWAQC region.

These efforts will help the region attain and maintain federal air quality standards while also ensuring that the most vulnerable residents of the region are protected from unhealthy air pollution. These efforts will also begin to address the issue of inequitable exposure to communities that have concerns over environmental justice.