



METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON AIR QUALITY COMMITTEE (MWAQC)

September 23, 2020
12:00 P.M. – 2:00 P.M.
Webinar

Chairman: Brandon Todd, District of Columbia

MEETING SUMMARY

MWAQC MEMBERS AND ALTERNATES

Brandon Todd, District of Columbia (Chair)
Tad Aburn, Maryland Department of the Environment
Kambiz Agazi, Fairfax County
Tom Ballou, Virginia Department of Environmental Quality
Tamera Blake-Wallace, Calvert County
Collin Burell, District of Columbia
Kelly Crawford, District Department of Energy and Environment
Michelle Davis-Younger, City of Manassas
Robert Day, City of College Park
Tom Dernoga, Prince George's County
Joe Gill, Prince George's County
Penny Gross, Fairfax County
Dawn Hawkins-Nixon, Prince George's County
Peter Kovar, City of Takoma Park
Leta Mach, City of Greenbelt
Del Pepper, City of Alexandria
Jim Ponticello, Virginia Department of Transportation
Tom Ross, City of Fairfax
Dave Snyder, City of Falls Church
Kari Snyder, Maryland Department of Transportation
Ram Tangirala, District Department of Energy and Environment

OTHERS

Frank Anderson, Fairfax County
Kevin Brown, Manufacturers of Emission Controls Association
Virginia Burke, Maryland Department of Transportation
Kathleen Field, Maryland Department of the Environment
Matthew Gaskin, District Department of Transportation
Regina Moore, Virginia Department of Transportation

Karl Munder, Maryland Department of the Environment
Lisa Nissley, Maryland Department of the Environment
Norbert Pink, Sierra Club Great Falls Chapter
Sam Stephens, District of Columbia
Marcia Ways, Maryland Department of the Environment

COG STAFF

Leah Boggs, COG Department of Environmental Programs
Jen Desimone, COG Department of Environmental Programs
Lyn Erickson, COG Department of Transportation Planning
Jeff King, COG Department of Environmental Programs
Sunil Kumar, COG Department of Environmental Programs
Tim Masters, COG Department of Environmental Programs
Mark Moran, COG Department of Transportation Planning
Jane Posey, COG Department of Transportation Planning
Kanti Srikanth, COG Department of Transportation Planning
Steve Walz, COG Department of Environmental Programs

1. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD, APPROVE MINUTES, CHAIR'S REMARKS

Brandon Todd, MWAQC Chair

Chair Brandon Todd called the meeting to order. There were no public comments. The May meeting summary was approved without any changes.

2. COMMITTEE REPORTS

MWAQC Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) – Tom Ballou

The MWAQC-TAC held a call on September 8 to discuss the following:

- Members discussed the ozone season up to date. It has been a very good ozone season for a number of reasons including the impact that coronavirus has had on travel.
- Dominion Energy gave a presentation of their electric school bus program.
- COG TPB Staff briefed members on an analysis of a particular project in Northern Virginia. TPB Staff also spoke about getting updated vehicle registration data for mobile emissions analysis.
- The proposed Ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standard (NAAQS) and Maryland's Aftermarket Catalytic Converter Rule were discussed in great detail.

Air and Climate Public Advisory Committee (ACPAC) – Leah Boggs

ACPAC held a meeting on September 21 to discuss the following:

- COG Staff briefed members on the metropolitan Washington region's nonattainment of the 2015 ozone season NAAQS.
- COG Staff also briefed members on the draft 2030 Regional Climate and Energy Action Plan, including regional mitigation and adaptation-related goals. Members were briefed on the 50 percent below 2005 levels emissions reduction goal by 2030, as well as being a Climate Ready Region by 2030, and a Climate Resilient Region by 2050 (definitions included in plan). Members are encouraged to review the draft plan and provide any feedback by October 16, 2020.

- Members received presentations on climate and environmental justice. In 2017, ACPAC released the Environmental Justice Toolkit. Prince George’s County’s Environmental Justice Commission and their Climate Action Plan were presented to members. Members were also given a presentation by the District of Columbia’s Sustainable Energy Utility (DCSEU) on their green workforce development program. COG has participated in this plan for the last three cohorts.
- Members heard from the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) on their Environmental Justice Campaign.
- Following up from the meeting, ACPAC members received information on how to comment on the District of Columbia’s initial stakeholder input process on the participation in the Multi-State MOU to accelerate electrification in the medium- and heavy-duty vehicle market. This is a Northeast States for Coordinated Air Use Management (NESCAUM)-led endeavor. DC and Maryland are signatories to this MOU.

Clean Air Partners – Jen Desimone

Clean Air Partners have been very active this summer and have been involved in the following:

- All outreach has shifted online due to coronavirus. To heighten awareness during the hottest time of the summer, Clean Air Partners designated the first week of August as Ozone Action Week. Daily content and challenges focused on steps to take to reduce behaviors that contribute to the formation of ground level ozone. Activities were promoted with partners and included Digital Ambassadors, media relations, and meteorologist outreach. Activities included:
 - Outreach via Digital Ambassadors (“social media street teams”) – partnered with 11 local social media influencers to promote content through Instagram and Facebook.
 - Content posted on Clean Air Partners social media. Utilized #CAPOzoneAction hashtag to boost reach of posts.
 - Media coverage – received media coverage during and after the week.
- Clean Air Partners joined Commuter Connections to promote Car Free Day. Promotional efforts included promoted social posts on Twitter and Facebook beginning September 15 and continued through September 22. Posts included links to carfreemetrodc.org to encourage residents to pledge. An email blast will be sent to 11,000 Clean Air Partners subscribers promoting Car Free Day.
- Clean Air Partners is planning further outreach around the following events:
 - Energy Efficiency Day (October 7) – social content
 - Children’s Health Day (October 8) – virtual event including a Twitter Chat and programming to promote the On the Air education curriculum.
 - Home Heating Guide - social content
 - Eco-driving holiday mini-campaign (November 10 - December 15) – social campaign
- Clean Air Partners completed a redesign of their On the Air education curriculum. The curriculum includes five units with 51 activities related to air quality and climate change.

Climate, Energy, and Environment Policy Committee (CEEPC) – Steve Walz

CEEPC met earlier today, September 23.

- Members reviewed the draft 2030 Climate and Energy Action Plan that is being developed to meet the region’s greenhouse gas (GHG) emission reduction goals. Members reviewed mitigation actions to reduce emissions, as well as resilience actions to respond to climate impacts in the region. Members also reviewed a draft Resolution to be voted on by the COG Board of Directors. This Resolution has updated goals, including an interim goal of reducing

emissions by 50 percent below 2005 levels by 2030, which CEEPC members support. The Resolution also includes resiliency goals that promote greater investment into measures that improve regional resiliency. CEEPC voted to move this Resolution to the COG Board. The COG Board will vote on this at their October meeting.

3. LOCAL AND STATE UPDATES

Local Members and State Air Agencies

- Ram Tangirala (DOEE) said that base year emission inventory for 2015 ozone standards was sent out for one last review as part of the public engagement process. This process ends on September 28.
- Tad Aburn (MDE) said that Maryland has had its lowest ozone season ever this year largely due to the pandemic. MDE has also moved forward with four regulatory initiatives over the last few months; a regulation to reduce methane and ozone precursor emissions from natural gas compressor stations and related infrastructure; a regulation to phase out HFCs; a catalytic converter rule, and; they are currently working on a regulation to reduce GHG emissions and ozone precursor emissions from landfills. Transportation emissions continue to be a high priority. Research shows that 70 percent of the ozone emissions within the state originate upwind states. There is a 184C petition from the Ozone Transport Commission that is asking for deeper emission reductions from Pennsylvania power plants.
- Dawn Hawkins-Nixon (Prince George's County) said that Prince George's County's Climate Action Commission will convene on October 16. This Commission is charged with developing a Climate Action Plan for the County.
- Tom Ballou (DEQ) said that Virginia's base year inventory has been updated with a significant revision and is out for public comment, which will be ending soon.

4. MWAQC NOMINATING COMMITTEE FOR 2021 OFFICERS

Brandon Todd, MWAQC Chair

The election of 2021 MWAQC officers will take place at the December MWAQC meeting. In preparation for this, MWAQC is requesting volunteers to serve on a Nominating Committee; one member from the District, one from Maryland, and one from Virginia. The Nominating Committee will meet one to two times via conference call to develop the 2021 slate of officers. This has to be completed by the December meeting. Brandon Todd volunteered to serve on the Nominating Committee for the District of Columbia. Leta Mach volunteered for the State of Maryland. Del Pepper volunteered for the Commonwealth of Virginia.

5. OZONE SEASON UPDATE

Sunil Kumar, COG Environmental Engineer

Sunil Kumar provided an update on 2020's ozone season.

- With regard to peak 8-hour average ozone levels between March 1 and August 31, there were only two code orange days (both in July), 31 code yellow days, and the remainder were all code green days. These results have been largely impacted by both the weather, as well as Covid-19 restrictions.
- There has been a downward trend in the number of ozone exceedance days between 1997 and 2020. Over the last four years (2017-2020), exceedance days have been reduced to below 10 each year.
- There are two factors that affect ozone levels; emissions and weather. Ozone exceedance days correlate with the number of days temperatures exceed 90 degrees Fahrenheit. Prior to 2008, ozone exceedance days were well above the number of days with a temperature over 90 degrees Fahrenheit. Since 2008, this trend has flipped, with ozone exceedance days falling below over 90 degree Fahrenheit days. This is largely due to emissions reductions.

- The first code orange day has also been pushed further back over time. In the mid-2000s, the first code orange day was usually at the end of March or beginning of April. In 2019, it was at the beginning of June and this year it was in July.
- The region did not attain the 2015 8-hour Ozone NAAQS based on draft 2018-2020 data. The attainment deadline is August 3, 2021. There has been a consistent downward trend of 8-hour design values between 1999 and 2020. However, between 2015 and 2020 the trend has flattened right above the NAAQS. The 2015 NAAQS is 70 parts per billion (ppb), and since 2015 the metropolitan Washington region has had between 70 and 72 ppb. Currently, the region is at 71 ppb.
- With regard to 24-hour average fine particle (PM_{2.5}) levels between March 1 and August 31, there was one code red day (July 4 – largely due to Independence Day fireworks), 36 code yellow days, and the remainder were all code green days.
- There has been a downward trend in the number of PM_{2.5} exceedance days between 1999 and 2020. Over the last ten years (2011-2020), there have been six years with zero code orange and zero code red days. In both 2019 and 2020, there was one code red day (both were on July 4), and zero code orange days.
- The COG region has met the 1997 Annual PM_{2.5} Standard for the past 10 years. The region has also met the 24-hour PM_{2.5} Standard for the past 15 years.
- Regarding next steps for ozone planning, the metropolitan Washington region is eligible to apply for an extension of the attainment date by one year to August 3, 2022. This would not extend the deadline for a State Implementation Plan if the region fails to reach attainment in the additional year.

6. EPA'S PROPOSED OZONE NATIONAL AMBIENT AIR QUALITY STANDARD

Steve Walz, COG Environmental Program Director

On July 13, 2020, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) proposed to retain the primary and secondary ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS). The standards, established in 2015, are currently set at 70 parts per billion (ppb). There are two parts to the standard. The primary standard addresses public health, and the secondary standard addresses on public welfare (animals, crops, vegetation, and buildings). EPA's basis for retaining the standard is based on information contained in the Integrated Science Assessment, quantitative risk analyses and policy evaluations, advice from the Clean Air Science Advisory Committee (CASAC), public input, and an exposure-based assessment. Previously, CASAC receive expertise from the CASAC Ozone Review Panel, made up of members, outside public health researchers, and experts on air quality welfare impacts. The 2020 NAAQS review process did not include such an expert panel. Additionally, the EPA did not include recent studies showing cardiovascular impacts could occur at ozone levels lower than the current standards. Environmental health risks were also not taken into account. The EPA is soliciting comments on the proposed decision to retain current standards and the last day for comments will be October 1, 2020. There have been two virtual public hearings in the past month.

MWAQC-TAC and the State Air Agencies have recommended that staff draft a comment letter to send to the EPA on behalf of MWAQC. The comment letter expresses concern with the EPA's expedited review process and lack of consideration of recent studies that show adverse health impacts on a level below the current NAAQS. It also expresses concern with the small margin of safety for the protection of public health, particularly sensitive populations. The comment letter requests that the EPA withdraws the proposed rule, and start a broader review process with a newly constituted CASAC Ozone Review Panel.

Del Pepper asked if any effort has been made to contact the EPA with regard to this review process.

- Steve replied that the three State Air Agencies have been in contact with the EPA through the Region 3 office. They have not made any specific comments on this issue.

MWAQC members approved the comment letter to be sent to the EPA.

7. MARYLAND AFTERMARKET CATALYTIC CONVERTER RULE

Tad Aburn, Maryland Department of the Environment

Tad Aburn briefed members on Maryland's Aftermarket Catalytic Converter (AMCC) rule, which was recently adopted in the state. The catalytic converter is one of the most important parts of a car's emission control system. The problem arises when these car components need replacing and they are replaced with inferior parts, thus diminishing emission reduction benefits. Due to delays in policy updates at the Federal level; Maryland, the Ozone Transport Commission (OTC), and other states have started adopting state and local problems to address the problems associated with inferior catalytic converter replacements. The OTC has adopted a model rule for Aftermarket Catalytic Converters. Mobile source emissions are now the dominant source of NOx emissions, a precursor to ozone, in the metropolitan Washington region. OTC's rule will reduce these emissions, which may push the region into ozone NAAQS attainment. Estimated NOx reductions based on OTC's work would be around 3.5 tons/day in the DC, Maryland, and Virginia Nonattainment Area. This rule would have a great impact on emission reductions in the region and it is strongly supported by manufacturers and environmental advocates. Maryland's proposed rule was approved by the State's Air Quality Control Advisory Council in 2020 and will be finalized in early 2021. California, New York, and Maine have already adopted AMCC regulations. Colorado has just adopted their AMCC regulation this year. New Jersey, Connecticut, and Massachusetts are currently working on AMCC regulations. Maryland hopes to see the AMCC program adopted throughout the DC, Maryland, and Virginia nonattainment area.

- Ram Tangirala stated that DOEE would support the AMCC rule and would support MWAQC in making recommendations to the COG jurisdictions.
- Tom Ballou stated that VDEQ would prefer this type of regulation to come from the Federal government. Virginia has a few hurdles with regard to adopting such a rule. The control that VDEQ has over vehicle emissions is very limited. Virginia would need legislation to act on this issue. Historically, Virginia legislators have not looked favorably on this type of legislation. If VDEQ got legislative authority to act on this, they would need to start a full regulatory process involving stakeholder engagement and it would take a number of years to enact regulations. VDEQ is happy to evaluate this program as part of an overall strategy to attain NAAQS compliance in the region. VDEQ would not be able to recommend adoption of such a rule.
- Del Pepper asked how the age of the replacement catalytic converter is regulated. Tad Aburn said that often there are provisions that prohibit used replacement converters, but sometimes there are provisions that allow this. In general, the process is based on California's process, which certifies aftermarket catalytic converters to ensure their quality. This is an issue that needs to be addressed.
- Dave Snyder expressed concern regarding voting on this issue and suggested tabling the issue until more information is available to members. Greater technical information can be made available to members.
- There will be further discussion on this topic at the next MWAQC meeting on December 16, or on a scheduled call before this meeting.

8. PROGRAM UPDATES

Jen Desimone, Air Program Chief

2015 Ozone Standard Base Year Inventory:

- During their July call, the MWAQC Executive Committee approved Maryland's baseyear inventory for the 2015 ozone NAAQS for EPA submittal.
- DC and VA inventories are in the public hearing and comment period, which is expected to close in October. DC and Virginia intend to seek final approval of their inventories from the Executive

Committee in the October/November timeframe.

Turn Your Engine Off Campaign:

Due to Covid-19 restrictions, the Turn Your Engine Off campaign could not utilize Street Teams for its spring 2020 outreach. Instead outreach shifted to placing signage at 10 truck stops. Signs were placed at prominent locations where they could be seen by truck drivers for the month of June. Artwork files are available for members who wish to place signs in their jurisdictions.

Air Quality Trends Report:

Staff completed an update of the Air Quality Trends Report which is done every 3 years. The report was developed for the general public and provides an overview of air pollutants regulated under the Clean Air Act; the health effects, sources, and trends. The report presents data trends from 2007 to 2019. The report will be published on the COG website following today's meeting.

9. ADJOURN

The meeting was adjourned at 1:40pm. The next MWAQC meeting is scheduled for December 16, 2020.