

Air and Climate Public Advisory Committee

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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, March 14, 2010
Room 4/5
5:30 P.M.-7:30 P.M.

ACPAC members: Sarah Bunn, Bill Butler, Beverly Fourier, Raphael Isaac, Andrew Kambour, Sally Kane, Daniel Lee, Jennifer Peterson, Alexander Ryan-Bond

Staff: Maia Davis, Leah Boggs

1. Call to Order, Adoption of Agenda, Approval of Minutes

The meeting was called to order at 5:40pm. The agenda and minutes from February 28, 2011 were approved with no changes.

2. Overview of Climate Action Workplan and Progress Report (Maia Davis, DEP Staff)

In January 2010, CEEPC adopted a 2010 - 2012 Climate and Energy Action Workplan that identified measures that will assist COG and its members to achieve regional climate goals. Two of the measures include establishing a process to track progress and developing an annual progress report. COG staff developed surveys for local governments, school systems and utilities in order to track progress to report in a progress report. Maia Davis, COG staff, shared the results of the local government and school system surveys. Based on the results ACPAC members were asked for their input on what the priorities should be. Concern was expressed for efficient street light programs, sustainable purchasing and commercial benchmarking.

3. EIP Report on Mercury Emissions from Power Plants (Jen Peterson, EIP)

Jen Peterson, Environmental Integrity Project (EIP) and ACPAC member, shared the highlights of two EIP recent reports on power plants, including *"America's Power Plan Mercury Polluters: The Good, The Bad, And The Dirty"* and *"Getting Warmer: US CO₂ Emissions from Power Plants Emissions Rise 5.6% in 2010."* Highlights from Jen's overview of the mercury report include:

- The single largest source of mercury air pollution is from coal-fired power plants.
- Mercury is a highly toxic metal and once released from power plant smokestacks into the atmosphere it settles into lakes and rivers. Humans mainly come in contact with mercury through eating fish.
- EPA's authority to regulate mercury is under fire with the current federal budget issues. Power plants are already cost-effectively using technology to reduce mercury emissions.
- The top 25 least emitting power plants in the country combined are emitting less than 2 power plants in Texas.
- Maryland law requires mercury emissions to be reduced by 80% in 2010 and 90% in 2013.
- No plant in the DC, MD or CA is in the top or bottom 25 mercury emitters except 1 plant in Virginia is among the best.

Highlights from Jen's overview of the CO₂ report include:

- 50 plants account for one-third of the CO₂ emissions of the approximately 600 plants in the US.

- Results for the Top 50 2010 CO₂ Emissions by State for power plants include:
 - Texas, Florida and Ohio have are the highest CO₂ power plant emissions for 2010.
 - Virginia and Maryland are slightly below the half-way point on the list.
 - The District of Columbia is the least CO₂ emitting because they have the least amount of plants.

During the discussion it was pointed out that Texas seems to be one of the worst states for both pollutants; however, they also have a high concentration of wind power in the state. During the discussion there was a question about if the type of coal plays a role in the emissions of these pollutants and one ACPAC member pointed out that there is no difference for CO₂ but some eastern coals have more mercury. It was also pointed out that SO₂ emissions have been significantly reduced in Maryland and Virginia.

4. Green Building in Metropolitan Washington Region (Leah Boggs, COG DEP Staff)

Leah Boggs gave an overview of green building in the metropolitan Washington region. COG's Intergovernmental Green Building Group (IGBG) began in 2005 and in 2006 COG Board adopted a Regional Green Building Policy. COG's draft report on green building for the region makes several recommendations and points out green building trends in the region. A few key points from the report include there was 22.9 million square feet of green building developed between 2003 – 2009, 86% of LEED construction from 2003 – 2009 was located in regional activity centers and 64% of all 2003 – 2009 LEED construction was within ½ mile of a Metro Rail station.

5. WE CAN Energy Efficiency Outreach Next Steps Discussion (Maia Davis, COG DEP Staff)

Maia Davis reviewed the WE CAN website and campaign and discussed some of the challenges, opportunities and options under consideration for moving beyond the pilot program. ACPAC members made several suggestions on groups that would be interested in WE CAN such as:

- Holistic mom networks
- Simplicity networks
- High schools
 - Recruiting participants could earn students credit toward their community service hours
 - Could have a school against school challenge
 - Prizes could include I-PODs, \$500 scholarship, donation to school for computers, athletics or other need of particular school

6. Future Meeting Topics

Members were asked to share topics of interest to them that could be a future ACPAC meeting agenda item. Ideas that were shared throughout the meeting included:

- Efficient street light pilot program highlights
- Invite an American Lung Association (ALA) representative to discuss an ALA report on the case for cleaning up coal-fired power plants
- Nuclear power in the region
- Invite a US Green Building Council (USGBC) representative to discuss measures in LEED that relate to air quality and if LEED buildings are maintaining standards that lead to LEED certification
- Clean Air Partners air quality forecasting and outreach

7. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 7:35pm.

Next meeting: April 18 – 5:30pm – Room 4/5