

Date: August 4, 2005

To: Joan Rohlf

From: Ann-Drea Hensley, Air Quality Intern

Subject: Survey of Air Quality Action Day Criteria in 29 Nonattainment Areas

Introduction

A survey was conducted to determine which forecasting regions call their ozone action day programs on Code Orange (or higher) forecasts. The survey involved forecast regions from across the country, with 30 of those regions designated as non-attainment for 8-hour ozone. A spreadsheet with the forecast region, state, forecast criteria, and attainment/nonattainment status is attached to the email.

Survey Background

Many forecasting regions create similar ozone concentrations and meteorological influences as the Metropolitan Washington, D.C. non-attainment zone. The forecast regions that resemble the Metropolitan Washington, D.C. region include Southern Coastal California, Chicago, IL, Western and Southeastern Michigan, and St. Louis, MO.

Out of the 29 non-attainment regions polled, 25 call an ozone action day or similar program (OAD, AQAD, etc) on the Code Orange level or higher. The only forecasting areas we surveyed that do not report ozone action days on code orange or higher (in the similar counties and states) are located in San Joaquin in California, all of New Jersey, the Pennsylvania and New Jersey cooperative region, and Baton Rouge in Louisiana.

Forecast Regions' Comments

In California, the main reason given for not forecasting at Code Orange is because there would be over 100 forecasted each year. The forecaster in the South Coast area received feedback from the public who said forecasters would be "crying wolf" to call so many ozone action days and thus, the ozone action day would lose its meaning.

Many of the forecast regions/states (including Alabama, Michigan, Northeast Ohio, St. Louis and Connecticut) list the health standard as the reason for their OAD/AQAD criteria.

In Cleveland, the Northeast Ohio Area-wide Coordinating Agency (NOACA) recommends determining what purpose the ozone action day program will serve before creating the ozone action day criteria. Forecasters at this agency feel that if it will focus more on health, the OAD forecast should reflect that and be issued when ozone is predicted to exceed the national health standard of 85 ppb; if the OAD is based more on a preventative measure, then regions could use the same or less strict criteria. The NOACA places great importance on the health of their population. However, they do get some backlash from concerned individuals when there is an ozone action day issued in the entire region, but the values in their county do not exceed the standard.

For Northern Illinois and Michigan, ozone action days are issued based on both meteorological data and ozone prediction models. The two Midwest states use a cooperative forecast that will call ozone action days if two or more monitors are predicted to exceed the health standard and if meteorological conditions such as lake winds and temperatures favor the creation of high ozone.

One state, Oregon, requires two days of only moderate ozone to issue an ozone alert. However, they do still call ozone action days at the Code Orange level or higher.

Texas holds about 9 major forecasting areas, including Houston, Galveston, San Antonio, Corpus Cristi, Dallas, etc. They that feel the health standard must be used as the guidelines for the ozone action days, despite already having issued about 50 ozone action days this season. Ron Wells, of the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, cited the health standard and said although the local governments sometimes do not agree with calling so many ozone action days, the forecasters and health officials believe in the importance of notifying the public when their health is at risk.

Survey of AQAD Programs, August 4, 2005

Forecast Region	State	Orange	Red	Other/Notes	No Program	8-hr NAA
Birmingham	AL	X		also PM forecast at AQI > 100		X
Phoenix	AZ	X		high pollution advisory		X
Ventura	CA			alerts at AQI > 182 AQI	X	X
San Joaquin Valley	CA		X			X
San Diego	CA	X				X
Sacramento	CA	X				X
Bay Area	CA	X				X
South Coast (48 counties)	CA			does not forecast on orange because there would be too many days	X	X
Entire state	CT	X				X
Atlanta	GA	X				X
Chicago	IL	X		must be widespread within surrounding 4 states		X
Central Indiana	IN	X				X
Kansas City	KS	X				
Louisville	KY	X				X
Baton Rouge	LA		X			X
Mass.	MA	X				X
Southeast Mich.	MI	X		must be at 2 monitors		X
Western Mich.	MI	X		must be at 2 monitors		X
Jackson and coast	MS	X				
St. Louis	MO	X				X
New Jersey	NJ		X			X
Metro Philly/NJ	NJ/PA		X			X
Research Triangle	NC	X				X
Cincinnati	OH			Health advisory at AQI > 100	X	X
Mid-Ohio	OH	X				X
Cleveland	OH	X		health concerns a major influence		X
Portland	OR	X		ozone in Code Yellow < 48 hrs issue smog alert		
Pittsburg	PA	X		entire state		X
Columbia	SC	X				X
Entire state	TN	X				X
9 Metro Areas	TX	X		region non-attainment (minus Corpus Cristi)		X
SE Wisconsin	WI	X				X

Note: NAA stands for non-attainment area

Contact Name & Organization	Forecast Region	State
Sam Bell	Birmingham	AL
Joe Paul, DEQ	Phoenix	AZ
CSAH, CARB	Ventura	CA
Evan Shipp, Air Pollution Control District	San Joaquin Valley	CA
Spare The Air	San Diego	CA
Spare The Air	Sacramento	CA
BAQMD	Bay Area	CA
SCAQMD	South Coast (48 counties)	CA
DEP	Entire state	CT
EPDNR	Atlanta	GA
Illinois EPA (Kim Kuntzman)	Chicago	IL
Indiana Dept. of Environmental Management	Central Indiana	IN
DAQ, MARC	Kansas City	KS
Kentuckiana Ozone Prevention Coalition	Louisville	KY
Greater Baton Rouge (Louisiana DEQ)	Baton Rouge	LA
DEP	Mass.	MA
SEMCOG/Michigan DEQ (Jim Haywood)	Southeast Mich.	MI
West Mich. Clean Air Coalition	Western Mich.	MI
DEQ	Jackson and coast	MS
Reg. Clean Air Partners (Susanna Fukes ALA)	St. Louis	MO
State Ozone Partnership	New Jersey	NJ
NJDEP Bureau of Air Monitoring	Metro Philly/NJ	NJ/PA
NJDEP Bureau of Air Monitoring	Research Triangle	NC
AQ Environ. Services	Cincinnati	OH
Mid-OH Reg. Planning Commission	Mid-Ohio	OH
NOACA (8 county region)	Cleveland	OH
DEQ Air Quality Department	Portland	OR
Sean Nolan	Pittsburg	PA
DHEC	Columbia	SC
Pam Frasier Barkey	Entire state	TN
CEQ (AQ Planning Section - Ron Wells)	9 Metro Areas	TX
Wisconsin Partners for Clean Air	SE Wisconsin	WI