



Delaware Valley Regional  
Planning Commission

# air quality newsletter

## AQP Joins EPA's EnviroFlash System to Disseminate Alerts in 2010



AQP members might notice something a little different about their air quality alerts beginning in the spring of 2010. The AQP will begin using the EPA's EnviroFlash alert system in 2010. EnviroFlash is an email alert system that delivers air quality messages and forecasts right to your inbox. The AQP will continue to send air quality alerts out to the media and partner Transportation Management Associations, but EnviroFlash will allow individuals to sign up for air quality forecasts and set the air quality level at which they would like to receive the forecasts.

In the past, the AQP sent alerts out to partners when the Air Quality Index was forecast to reach the Code Orange, unhealthy level, or worse. Now partners can decide which level they receive the forecasts; everyday, code yellow, orange or red.

Signing up is easy. Just provide your name, email address and zip code or city for which you would like the air quality forecast and it will be delivered right to your email.

Existing AQP partners, will be signed up for EnviroFlash to receive alerts at the Code

Orange level by the Partnership. Members can then manage the level and frequency at which they receive alerts just by signing into the system. Partners will now be able to remove themselves from the alert list also.

The general public will be able to sign up for the air quality forecasts right on the AQP website beginning in April 2010 or they can sign up for EnviroFlash right now at [www.enviroflash.info](http://www.enviroflash.info).

The forecasts for southeastern Pennsylvania and New Castle County, Delaware will still be provided by Penn State University. The New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection will provide the air quality forecasts for the New Jersey counties in the Delaware Valley.

Moving to EnviroFlash will simplify the management of air quality messaging and since the system is automated, alerts will get out to the public at the same time each day.

The AQP will continue to post the daily air quality forecast on the Partnership website at [www.airqualitypartnership.org](http://www.airqualitypartnership.org) and on recorded messages on the Partnership hotline number at 800.872.7261.

If you have any questions or concerns about the changes to the AQP alert system please call Sean Greene at 215-238-2860.

## US EPA Plans to Reconsider Ozone Standard



On September 19, 2009, US EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson announced that EPA will reconsider the 2008 Ground-level Ozone Standard to ensure that the newly adopted standards are scientifically sound and sufficiently protective of public health.

The EPA will conduct a review of scientific studies and the findings of EPA's independent Clean Air Scientific Advisory Committee (CASAC) as well as public comments from the rulemaking process. When the 2008 standard was being proposed, the CASAC recommended an ozone standard that was more protective of public health than the one that was adopted. Many public health and environmental advocates criticized the EPA for not following the CASAC's recommendations.

The EPA will propose any changes to the 2008 Ozone Standard by December 2009 and will issue a final decision by August 2010. The EPA is proposing to stay the designation of 2008 Ozone Non-attainment Areas until the review is completed. This stay will allow states to respond to the latest ozone standard when developing clean air implementation plans and ozone emissions budgets.

The proposed stay in implementation of the 2008 Ozone Standard will also give states and air agencies more time to settle issues related to the 1997 Ozone Standards. The DVRPC region is currently designated as a non-attainment area for the 1997 standard and may not meet the 1997 standard before the region is also designated as being in non-attainment of the 2008 standard. These overlapping non-attainment designations complicate air quality planning and conformity demonstrations and the proposed stay will remove some administrative hurdles.

Should the ozone standards be tightened again, the region can expect an increase in the number of Air Quality Action days as the Code Orange threshold will be lowered to match the new standard. This tightening of the standard makes the Partnership's efforts to reduce ozone pollution that much more important to help the region to meet federal standards and make measurable gains in the region's air quality.

## Clean Air Council Launches Idlefreephilly.org



On October 13, 2009, the Clean Air Council announced the launch of the IdleFreePhilly.org website at City Hall in Center City Philadelphia. IdleFreePhilly.org uses the free online mapping software, SeeClickFix, to allow members of the community to identify problems in their neighborhood and offer solutions. The purpose of IdleFreePhilly is to allow citizens to report incidences of idling trucks or buses so that the city can step up anti-idling

education or enforcement in areas where idling is identified as a problem.

Idling diesel trucks and buses for more than five minutes is a violation of both city and state regulations. The city anti-idling regulations can result in fines of up to \$100 from either the Philadelphia Parking Authority (PPA) or the City's Air Management Services (AMS).

The purpose of the regulations is to reduce toxic air pollution from diesel vehicles, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and protect public health in areas where diesel vehicles operate. Reducing idling also benefits the vehicle's owner by saving fuel and reducing wear and tear on the engine.

The IdleFreePhilly.org website will essentially allow citizens in the city to help the PPA and AMS identify idling hotspots. Each time someone uses the mapping application to report idling vehicles; that complaint is emailed to AMS. Once idling hotspots are identified, AMS can post educational signage or increase enforcement in the area. The goal of the program is not to hand out tickets but to ultimately reduce vehicle idling in the city.

The Clean Air Council developed the IdleFreePhilly.org website with funding from the Sustainable Skylines Initiative (SSI), through a grant provided to DVRPC by US EPA Region III. The Council provided matching funds for the project.

The SSI is a locally-led, EPA-supported, public-private partnership to reduce air

emissions and promote sustainability with the goal of healthier air and a cleaner environment for local citizens, government and business.

Participating communities work cooperatively with EPA and other partners to increase community participation and leverage resources.

IdleFreePhilly.org is currently live and collecting reports of idling incidents in the city. For questions about the website and the Clean Air Council's anti-idling efforts, contact Kate Zaidan at [kzaidan@cleanair.org](mailto:kzaidan@cleanair.org). To learn more about the Greater Philadelphia SSI please visit: [www.dvrpc.org/ssi](http://www.dvrpc.org/ssi).

**air** **QUALITY**

Save Fuel, Improve Employee Health, and Protect the Environment

If you would like to learn more about how you can reduce idling vehicles at your facility contact:

Sean Greene at the AQP  
**215-238-2860**  
or  
Kate Zaidan at the Clean Air Council  
**215-567-4004**

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE AIR QUALITY PARTNERSHIP, CONTACT: [AIRQUALITY@DVRPC.ORG](mailto:AIRQUALITY@DVRPC.ORG) / 215.238.2860

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