

RAQC's Enhanced Ozone Education Campaign is Well Underway

June 1 marked the first day of the region's summer ozone season and the official launch of the Regional Air Quality Council's (RAQC) large-scale, multi-media campaign to educate the public about ground-level ozone pollution.

The campaign, entitled "Let's Take Care of Our Summer Air," is a call to action to members of the community. It is educating the public about ground-level ozone pollution and how citizens can help reduce harmful emissions by modifying simple day-to-day activities on the go, around the yard and at home. To assist the RAQC and its partners with this challenging task is JohnstonWells Public Relations and Launch Advertising, who were hired in February following a competitive process. These two highly qualified firms are working with RAQC and its partners on a daily basis to ensure the campaign meets its educational and awareness goals.

As a means to measure the success of this campaign, National Research Center, Inc. (NRC) was hired to conduct public opinion research both pre- and post-campaign. The results of the pre-campaign research are discussed in more detail on page two. In addition to a paid media advertising campaign and increased public relations efforts, the RAQC is boosting its outreach efforts to local governments and the general public through events. More detail on these specific programs and events follows.

Students from Frederick and Longmont Schools Win First AirWaves Contest

The RAQC in conjunction with Envirotec partnered to host this year's first "AirWaves" scholarship program for high school students. "AirWaves" challenged the students to create 30 second public service announcements (PSAs) relating air quality and public health. The two selected entries were chosen for their ability to make the important connection between vehicle maintenance and ozone pollution. The program included high school students attending schools in the seven-county metro-

area. The program encouraged students to use their creativity to write, research, and produce the PSA. Destiny Fernandez from Frederick High School was chosen as a winner as were Jennifer Kreps, Dustin Kleffner, and Alex "Mo" Diner from Olde Columbine High School in Longmont. The Ozone Advisory Committee selected the two winning entries who received their awards when they recorded the PSAs in the Clear Channel studios on June 1. The students will receive a \$1,500 college scholarship and their respective schools will receive \$500 to be used for environmental education. The PSAs were aired on 97.3 KBCO from June 6 to July 17. The RAQC hopes to continue AirWaves next year and to grow awareness of the program throughout the region.

Over 500 Vehicles Inspected at Car Care Fairs

Record numbers of Denver-metro citizens joined the RAQC this year to participate in the Car Care Fairs as NAPA-certified technicians inspected more than 500 vehicles!

The RAQC and Colorado Select NAPA AutoCare Group (NAPA) partner each year to host the Car Care Fairs and hope to continue to increase participation in future years. NAPA recruited volunteers to inspect vehicles and to assist at the 21 locations in Safeway parking lots throughout the region. The event has grown each year as the number of events nearly doubled this year from 12 locations last year.

Volunteers also handed out more than 300 non-spill, non-permeable gas cans to Car Care Fair participants. Additionally, Envirotec participated by bringing a RapidScreen van to one of the locations. The Spinal Injury Foundation also contributed to the event by adjusting head restraints at several of the locations.

Representatives from both the RAQC and NAPA made appearances on all of the major networks on the morning of the event which seemed to be the driving force behind motorists' participation. AutoCare Radio on 630 KHOW sponsored by NAPA also devoted the entire radio program to the event which helped to increase participation. The RAQC

Published by:

Regional Air Quality Council
1445 Market Street
Suite 260
Denver, CO 80202
p: (303) 629-5450
e: staff@raqc.org
w: www.raqc.org

LOCAL GOVERNMENT HIGHLIGHT

As part of this year's ozone outreach campaign, the RAQC is offering outreach funding for local governments. The funding is offered to public information offices and environmental services programs for local governments that want to educate the community about ozone pollution. The RAQC has awarded funding to the City of Federal Heights, the City and County of Denver, and Boulder County for ozone education and awareness.

The sub-grant process was competitive and awarded

grants to projects that offer the most innovative plans for ozone education and outreach.

The funding was awarded this summer to coincide with the RAQC's large-scale advertising and public relations campaign to promote ozone pollution awareness.

Local governments will use funding for an array of activities or events such as gas cap testing or printing materials to hand out to citizens at events.

For more information contact Sara O'Keefe at (303) 629-5450 ext. 220 or sokeefe@raqc.org.

FUNDING AWARDED

...Continued from PAGE 1

and NAPA look forward to planning another record turn-out event for the spring of 2006.

Research Shows Outreach Efforts on Target

After reviewing results from the research, it appears that the outreach efforts, both past and present, are on target to reach the public audience.

The team from National Research Center, Inc. (NRC) conducted research in late March to determine the level of public awareness about ground-level ozone pollution. The results were utilized by the advertising team from Launch and the public relations professionals from JohnstonWells to construct a more effective campaign and media plan.

The pre-campaign research consisted of a random telephone survey and two separate focus groups. NRC is currently in the field conducting the post-campaign research to compare pre- and post-campaign data. The research is an exciting segment of the campaign because it marks the first time the RAQC will be able to gauge the results of outreach and education efforts.

RAQC "Mows Down Pollution"

Mow Down Pollution is an event that invites citizens to bring in old gasoline-

powered lawn equipment in exchange for large discounts on low- or zero- emissions lawn equipment.

The RAQC along with Black and Decker and Home Depot partnered this year to offer citizens this unique opportunity. The RAQC also offered citizens the chance to recycle old gas cans in exchange for non-spill, non-permeable gas cans that will help to reduce emissions from spills and evaporation.

This year, the RAQC recycled close to 80 pieces of old, gasoline powered lawn equipment and sold nearly 170 pieces of new low- or zero- emissions lawn equipment. The event was held at seven participating Home Depot stores throughout the metro-area for the week long event that lasted from June 18 through June 25.

The RAQC was pleased to host this event this year and looks forward to future "Mow Down Pollution" events.

Local Governments Increase Involvement

Local governments will play a key role again this year to reduce ozone pollution in the metro-area. Fleet managers from 11 local governments are participating in a pilot program that focuses on testing gas caps of city fleet vehicles. The RAQC provides testing equipment for fleet managers as well as any replacement caps for vehicles that fail. In return, the fleet managers track the number of failed gas caps in order to quantify the emissions benefit. If the program does well, the RAQC hopes to extend the number of participating local governments to 20 next year.

Local governments were also invited to apply for a sub-grant to help increase ozone education and outreach efforts. (See box on this page for more information.)

"Clean Air Crew" Performs in Metro-Area

As part of the ozone outreach and awareness campaign the RAQC hired Cleo Parker Robinson Dance, who assembled a group to perform at various metro-area events throughout the summer. The performance group attracts attention by moving through-

Continued on PAGE 3...

Upcoming Events:

September 1
RAQC Board Meeting

September 15
AQCC Meeting

Helpful Contacts:

RAQC
(303) 629-5450

State Air Pollution Control Division
(303) 692-3100

Air Quality Hotlines
(303) 758-4848 or
(303) 782-0211

Reminders:

Tips for reducing ground-level ozone pollution:

- keep your car tuned up
- refuel in the evening on hot sunny days
- stop at the click – don't overfill gas tanks
- walk to lunch and run errands in the evening
- use gas-powered lawn equipment after 5 p.m. on hot, sunny days
- invest in new earth friendly lawn equipment

For more information:
www.OzoneAware.org

www.raqc.org

...Continued from PAGE 2

BOARD MEMBERS

Jim Scherer,
Chairman

Randy Ahrens
City & County of
Broomfield

Dennis Arfmann
Hogan & Hartson

Doug Benevento
Colo. Department of
Public Health &
Environment

Theresa Donahue
The Adams Group

Tom Norton
Colo. Department of
Transportation

Susan Sandstrom
City of Aurora

Dave Sladek
Delta Environmental
Consultants, Inc.

Melanie Worley
Douglas County /
Denver Regional
Council of Governments

out crowds at events, dancing and performing simple chants. The Clean Air Crew has performed at many events throughout the metro-area and looks forward to future performances. The RAQC is excited to bring messages about clean air to the public through such an enthusiastic and talented group of young people and hopes to continue next year.

For more information on any of the above programs, please contact Sara O'Keefe at (303) 629-5450 ext. 220 or sokeefe@raqc.org. ■

"Repair Your Air" Aims for Improvements

The Regional Air Quality Council (RAQC) staff and partners aim to make improvements to the "Repair Your Air" campaign with a variety of new strategies, designed to make the program more effective. The program uses remote-sensing technology to identify high emitting vehicles and offers incentives to bring them in for repairs.

One of the changes will be stricter criteria under which vehicles are admitted to the program. As opposed to the first phase that used only "one hit", the second phase of the program uses the "two hits" approach which requires two failed roadside tests before the motorist will be contacted to bring the vehicle in to the state's emissions testing centers to re-test the vehicle and identify potential repairs. If the vehicle fails the emissions test at the state's testing center, the motorist is offered up to \$500 in free repairs at an approved facility.

The primary goal of the new program is to identify and repair 850 vehicles during the three-year time frame to reduce hydrocarbon emissions in the Denver-metro area. To reach this goal, the RAQC and program partners will be involved in this year's ozone outreach and education campaign to raise program awareness. RAQC staff and partners look forward to the opportunity to promote "Repair Your Air" to the public.

For more information, please contact Steve McCannon at (303) 629-5450 ext. 230 or smcannon@raqc.org. ■

Stakeholders Update Maintenance Plans

Changes to the Carbon Monoxide (CO) and Particulate Matter (PM10) Maintenance Plans are underway after stakeholders identified the areas to update.

The next steps include the presentation of the plans to several policy makers including the state legislature and the Environmental Protection Agency before they can go into effect in 2007. The biggest changes to the CO maintenance plan are the removal of the oxygenated fuels program and the enhanced vehicle inspection and maintenance program (I/M 240). The revisions to the PM10 maintenance plan will also remove the I/M 240 program.

These modifications are recommended by the RAQC and APCD based on new data that recently became available using the MOBILE 6.2 model. The RAQC and APCD have collaborated on the revisions and hope to hold a public hearing before the Air Quality Control Commission in December to begin moving the approval process forward.

For more information, please contact Gerald Dilley at (303) 629-5450 ext. 240 or dilley@raqc.org. ■

GETTING ACQUAINTED

Kenneth H. Lloyd

Executive Director
(303) 629-5450 ext. 250

Gerald J. Dilley

Air Quality Engineer
(303) 629-5450 ext. 240

Sara O'Keefe

Communications Manager
(303) 629-5450 ext. 220

Misty Howell

Office Manager
(303) 629-5450 ext. 200

Sarah K. Schmitz

Communications Coordinator
(303) 629-5450 ext. 210

Steven McCannon

Program Manager
(303) 629-5450 ext. 230

Sarah T. Sullivan

Program Coordinator
(303) 629-5450 ext. 290

RAQC STAFF