



This Week in Review – December 13-17, 2004

(1) **CAAAC Forwards AQ Management Recommendations to EPA, Work to Continue on Unresolved Issues and Long-Term Framework (December 16, 2004)** – The Clean Air Act Advisory Committee (CAAAC) approved 38 recommendations developed by the Air Quality Management Work Group (AQMWG) and asked the Workgroup to continue its work on unresolved issues and a long-term framework for air quality management. The approved recommendations include measures to reform the SIP process in the short term in order to process upcoming SIPs efficiently, improve technical and scientific capacity, integrate criteria and toxic pollutants, spur innovation, communicate better with the public on air quality and provide for regional and national control strategies to help attain the air quality standards. While the AQMWG only proposed that the CAAAC forward 37 recommendations to EPA, as these were the ones that met the AQMWG's criteria of having achieved substantial consensus, at its meeting this week CAAAC moved to forward an additional recommendation to EPA: that the agency assist states in quantifying the potential greenhouse gas emissions increases and decreases for reduction measures primarily designed to address ozone, PM_{2.5}, regional haze and air toxics. Accordingly, 38 recommendations will now be forwarded to EPA. Another change made at the meeting is to retitle the AQMWG's report (which contains the 38 recommendations, other recommendations that require further discussion before forwarding to EPA and ideas for a long-term framework) to reflect that the report only covers phase one of the process, in recognition that the work of the AQMWG will continue. CAAAC has until January 6, 2005, to submit any comments to the AQMWG; these comments will be placed in an appendix to the final report, which will be delivered to the EPA Administrator by January 19, 2005. Members of the AQMWG included 17 industry representatives; 15 state, local and tribal representatives; four representatives from regional organizations; three representatives of environmental or public health organizations; and EPA staff. [For further information: Air Web – Criteria Pollutants Committee page]

(2) **EPA Releases Final PM_{2.5} Designations (December 17, 2004)** – EPA announced that a total of 47 areas encompassing 225 counties (191 full counties and 34 partial) have been designated nonattainment for the PM_{2.5} standard. According to EPA, 95 million people live in these areas, most of which are in the Midwest, mid-Atlantic, Southeast and California, though Libby, Montana, and the New York City metropolitan area are also included (Connecticut is the only state in New England

with a PM_{2.5} nonattainment area). Data from 2001-2003 was considered in making these designations. According to EPA, in response to several states' requests for EPA to instead use 2002-2004 data, states will have 45 days following publication of the designations to submit quality-assured 2004 data for EPA to consider, and if the 2002-2004 data show the area is attaining the standard, EPA will redesignate the area to attainment. Publication of the designations is expected in January, and designations will be effective 90 days after publication, which should be sometime in April. In several cases EPA included townships in counties adjacent to a metropolitan area in the area designated nonattainment in order to include power plants located in these townships. [For further information: Air Web – In the News and Criteria Pollutants Committee pages]

(3) STAPPA and ALAPCO Urge EPA Action on Diesel Engine Reflash (December 15, 2004) – STAPPA and ALAPCO transmitted a letter to Margo Oge, Director of EPA's Office of Transportation and Air Quality, urging the agency take to "swift and certain action to implement an enforceable nationwide program to reflash all diesel engines eligible for NO_x reflash under the heavy-duty diesel consent decrees." The letter, signed by Eric Skelton (Spokane, WA) and Nancy Seidman (MA), Co-Chairs of the Mobile Sources and Fuels Committee, was prompted by the associations' serious concern regarding the ongoing operation of heavy-duty diesel engines equipped with "defeat devices." The devices were installed by a group of engine makers on 1.3 million HDD engines during the 1990s to circumvent pollution controls during in-use highway driving and resulted in over 15 million tons of excess NO_x emissions. Under consent decrees reached by EPA and the offending engine makers in 1998, a low-NO_x rebuild program was established to recoup a portion, though not all (about 3 million tons), of the excess emissions; the agreements required engine makers to provide "reflash" kits to be installed at the time a defeat-device-equipped engine is rebuilt. However, according to EPA, only about 10 percent of the affected engines have been reflashed, either at the time of rebuild or under nationwide incentives programs. Given the poor results of this important program, STAPPA and ALAPCO are urging EPA to take action to ensure that the affected engines are reflashed to reduce the excess emission levels associated with the defeat devices. In the absence of such federal action, states will be forced to consider action of their own. [For further information: Air Web – In the News and Mobile Sources and Fuels Committee pages – and Clean Air World]

(4) EPA Releases Report Analyzing Trends in PM Emissions (December 14, 2004) – EPA released a report analyzing trends in emissions of particle pollution; according to the agency, concentrations of PM_{2.5} decreased 10 percent between 1999 and 2003 and concentrations of PM₁₀ decreased 7 percent during that timeframe. Nevertheless, in 2003, 62 million people lived in 97 U.S. counties with monitors showing violations of the PM_{2.5} standards, the PM₁₀ standards or both. Furthermore, in the Northeast, PM_{2.5} emissions increased 1 percent in this time period. EPA also describes in the report regional variations in PM and the contribution of transport. In the eastern half of the country sulfates account for 25 to 55 percent of PM_{2.5} levels; power plants are the largest contributor to this sulfate formation. In addition, regional pollution accounts for more than half of the measured PM_{2.5} in the East. In the

industrial Midwest, Northeast and southern California, nitrates make up a large portion of PM_{2.5}, especially in winter; power plants and highway vehicle emissions are large contributors to nitrate formation. [For further information: Air Web – In the News and Criteria Pollutants Committee pages]

(5) LA City Council Approves Community Benefits Agreement for LAX (December 14, 2004) – The Los Angeles City Council gave final approval to an agreement to modernize Los Angeles International Airport (LAX) that includes a package of environmental and economic improvements to benefit communities affected by the \$11-billion airport modernization program. The \$500-million, legally binding Community Benefits Agreement (CBA) is “the largest and most comprehensive CBA ever negotiated that will provide environmental, economic and educational benefits to the most impacted communities surrounding the airport,” according to Los Angeles Mayor James K. Hahn. Among the improvements that will result are the retrofitting of diesel construction vehicles and diesel vehicles operating on the tarmac, to curb emissions by 90 percent; electrifying airplane gates to eliminate emissions from jet engine idling; studying and making public the health impacts of airport operations on surrounding communities; sound-proofing all affected schools and increasing funding for sound-proofing homes; and providing \$15 million for job training for airport and aviation-related jobs and creating a local hiring program. In exchange for the agreement, more than 20 community groups, which comprise the Los Angeles Coalition for Economic, Environmental and Educational Justice, and two nearby school districts, have agreed not to sue the city over the airport modernization project. [For further information: www.envirorights.org/community-empowerment.html]

(6) U.S. GHG Emissions Increased in 2003, Up 13.4 Percent from 1990 Levels (December 13, 2004) – According to the Energy Information Administration, emissions of greenhouse gases (GHGs) in the U.S. increased by 0.7 percent from 2002 to 2003, and in 2003 were up 13.4 percent from 1990 levels. The U.S. economy grew by 3.0 percent in 2003; thus U.S. GHG intensity (GHG emissions per unit of real economic output) was 2.3 percent lower in 2003 than in 2002. From 1990 to 2003, U.S. GHG intensity declined by 22.3 percent. President Bush set a target in 2002 of reducing U.S. GHG intensity by 18 percent between 2002 and 2012. [For further information: Air Web – Global Warming Committee]

(7) World Meteorological Organization Says 2004 is Fourth Warmest Year on Record (December 15, 2004) – According to the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), 2004 is the fourth warmest year in the temperature record since 1861. The last ten years (1995-2004), with the exception of 1996, are among the warmest ten years on record. In addition, the WMO noted the number of extreme weather events this year. For example, during the Atlantic hurricane season, 15 named tropical storms developed; the average is around ten. Since 1995, there has been a marked increase in the annual number of tropical storms in the Atlantic Basin. [For further information: www.wmo.ch/index-en.html]

(8) Energy Department and Electricity Generators Announce Voluntary Partnership to Reduce GHG Emissions Intensity (December 13, 2004) – The U.S.

Department of Energy (DOE) and representatives of major electric utilities signed an agreement establishing a voluntary framework for reducing the greenhouse gas (GHG) emission intensity (measured as carbon-equivalent emissions per unit of economic output) of the power generation sector. The agreement is between DOE and a group called Power PartnersSM, which consists of the American Public Power Association, Edison Electric Institute, Electric Power Supply Association, Large Public Power Council, National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, Nuclear Energy Institute and Tennessee Valley Authority. The Power PartnersSM have pledged to reduce collectively the power sector's GHG emissions intensity by an equivalent of 3 to 5 percent (measured as emissions per unit of electricity produced) below 2000-2002 baseline levels, as measured over the 2010-2012 period. [For further information: www.ji.org/climate_05.pdf]

(9) California Adopts Energy-Efficiency Requirements for Appliances (December 15, 2004) – The California Energy Commission adopted new regulations to make appliances sold in the state the most energy efficient in the country. The new standards apply to such appliances as incandescent lamps; audio and video equipment; residential pool pumps and portable electric spas; ceiling, exhaust and whole-house fans; evaporative coolers; vending machines; commercial ice makers, refrigerators and freezers; and commercial hot food holding cabinets. According to the Energy Commission, the average household in California has an estimated 10 to 20 external power supplies that cost the homeowner as much as \$75 a year in wasted electricity. Because the energy savings are cumulative, the Commission estimates that over a 10-year period the energy savings from the new regulations will avoid the need for construction of three large power plants that would have to generate as much as 1,000 megawatts. The regulations take effect on a phased schedule beginning in January 2006. [For further information: www.energy.ca.gov/releases/2004_releases/2004-12-15_appliances.html]

(10) EPA Seeks Expressions of Interest in Meeting to Discuss Voluntary Residential Woodstove Change-Out Program (December 14, 2004) – EPA is interested in organizing a meeting for state and local air agencies in February 2005 to discuss a voluntary program to encourage the replacement of old, highly polluting residential woodstoves with new, more efficient, less polluting wood stoves or gas appliances. Areas with PM_{2.5} issues may be particularly interested in attending this meeting, which would be held in Atlanta, Georgia, on February 24 and 25, 2005. EPA is requesting that state and local air agencies respond by December 22, 2004 in order to determine whether there is sufficient interest in holding such a meeting. [For further information: Air Web – Criteria Pollutants Committee]

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