

NOACA Air Quality Public Advisory Task Force
Meeting Summary
May 25, 2005

The first meeting of the NOACA Air Quality Public Advisory Task Force (sign-in sheet attached) was called to order by the Chair, Dr. Nora Nock, at 4:00 p.m. on May 25, 2005.

Howard Maier, Executive Director of NOACA, gave the welcoming remarks and explained NOACA's interest in Northeast Ohio's air pollution problem.

The Chair then explained her professional background in epidemiology and her interest in and commitment to clean air for the sake of public health. The process for making recommendations to the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (OEPA) was explained briefly.

Pamela Davis, Senior Environmental Planner at NOACA, gave a presentation on the process by which State Implementation Plans (SIPs) for both ozone and fine particulates will be developed, including the timelines for Task Force recommendations. (Each PowerPoint presentation was later placed online at: www.noaca.org/siplan.html).

Amy Wainright, Air Quality Planner at NOACA, gave a presentation on the various types of sources of air pollution. Several questions were asked about the "Geauga effect" where high ozone levels are recorded in fairly rural settings. The explanation given was that NOx scavenging, which might be produced by industry or trucks, is not present in rural areas. Consequently, the ozone that forms during the day does not dissipate at night.

During the general discussion, questions were asked about the documented health effects of both ozone and fine particulates. The Chair responded by directing the Task Force to the two health studies contained in the binders given to the Task Force members. The studies indicated that ozone exacerbates respiratory conditions, causing increased hospital admissions. Fine particulate inhalation can result in premature death.

The interest in the impact on public health was great enough that the Task Force decided that a separate public forum on the subject would be appropriate and would be beneficial to the public at large. Discussion ensued as to the timing and broadcasting of such an event. A request was made that the public forum be held in July to coincide with an alternative fuels event, but the Task Force opted to hold the public forum sometime in the fall, in order to ensure good preparation and maximum turnout.

The Task Force discussed whether subcommittees should be formed on any of the various control measures. For the time being, it was decided that materials sent in advance of meeting dates could substitute for subcommittee formation.

Interest was expressed in having both monitoring and modeling discussed at the next meeting. Potential control measures were to be compiled and sent out before the meeting, so that Task Force members could review them.

In addition, questions were asked about mobile source emissions in the region and why the Cleveland-Akron-Lorain area might have a different emissions make-up than other areas of the state. The area was described as “NOx limited.” Further detail on emissions data was requested for the next meeting.

A question was asked as to whether other groups in the Cleveland-Akron-Lorain area were meeting to make SIP recommendations. The answer was that only the Task Force would advise NOACA, which would be making formal recommendations to the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency. NOACA is entering into a Memorandum of Understanding with the Ohio EPA, the Akron Regional Air Quality Management District, the City of Cleveland, and the Lake County General Health District, to create an avenue for those formal recommendations.

The activities of other nonattainment areas across Ohio and the five-state region were discussed briefly.

The Task Force held a general discussion on what dates and times might generate the most participation from the public. The next meeting was set, by consensus, for Monday, July 25, 2005, in the evening. A request that it run for three hours, rather than two, was made and approved.

The meeting adjourned a few minutes after 6:00 p.m.