

**Air Quality Advisory Council
Draft Minutes- July 1, 2008**

Members/ Alternates Present: Tova Sardot, Jan Hoem, Beth Berlin, Jason Boeckel, John Garberson, Dick Shimer, Patricia Hogan, Katie Evans

Staff Present: Mamie Colburn, Erik Englebert

Speaker: John Coefield, MT DEQ

Public Present: Guy Hanson, Jim Habeck

1. John Garberson called the meeting to order.
2. Absences were recognized.
3. Minutes were approved. John Garberson added to June attendees. Date corrected for Blackfoot River clean-up.
4. Public Comment on non-agenda items. Jim Habeck introduced himself and stated that he was interested in wildfire smoke issues.
5. Journal article presentation John Garberson.
 - a. Presenting an issue brief rather than an article. 6 page handout given, titled "Standards: Attainment VS Establishment." Standards change as science advances and political climate changes. Ozone not much of a problem in MT but problem in other areas. John Coefield states that we are monitoring ozone in Billings but well below standard. Clean air act requires a review of standards every 3 years.
 - b. Final rule revisions set this March to become effective in June. Recommended drop from 0.084 to 0.08 → 0.07. Panel wanted it lower but EPA set at 0.075. Should the Clean Air Act consider economic costs? Appears to have taken in by political influence. Secondary standard was not approved. Henry Waxman, House oversight committee, investigated. As of June 20, stalled out and in threat of lawsuit. Example of the difficult attainment of standards.
6. Jason will give next month's journal article.
7. Presentation by John Coefield with numerous, intermittent questions and discussion from the council.
 - a. Briefing on upcoming changes to the DEQ's website and how they are giving smoke information. Website under revision for clarity.
 - b. You can go to <http://www.deq.mt.gov/FireUpdates/index.asp> to see updates on smoke/fire impacts in MT.
 - c. Adding 4 new sites with real time data on PM2.5, Great Falls, Bozeman, Billings, Sidney. Right now color code is representing 1-hour ave. But they want to look

at 24 hour averages as well. The page will now soon show averages. PM10 is still important and has health risks but PM2.5 also important.

- d. National AQI numbers from AQI issue paper have been held up in committee for 16 months. A lot of people didn't feel 35 was protective for the most sensitive populations. Others outside of health/science realms thought it was too high. Impacts to tourism? Studies were national but forest fire smoke at 35 is different than non-forest fire cased PM at 35. But we can't tease these out without further epidemiological studies.
 - e. State of WA wanted to warn healthy people before they got to standard. They wanted to say it was unhealthy as soon as it got to the standard. They wanted to keep to the goal under 20. CA also created more restrictive standards. MT followed suit last year.
 - f. MT State Health Department Staff is working on some more detailed health/activity recommendations but we don't know if these will make it to the director. New science showing links between second hand smoke and heart attacks through proteins in the blood.
 - g. Also those with known conditions can often manage these actively during smoke but those who don't know they have conditions are more susceptible because they don't change their behavior or take precautions. Jan- wish more incident managers knew about that. As medical personnel on forest fires she saw the over 40 population impacted by smoke more heavily.
 - h. Impacts of the Change: Last year the new more protective MT DEQ health descriptor categories caused about 5-6 old type "moderate" days to bump up to the "unhealthy for sensitive groups." Tourism industry has concerns but promulgated that not all areas of the state are affected at once.
 - i. Public comment: Age ranges for elderly/children should be defined in the plan. Katie Evans stated that this is working knowledge that physicians are aware of.
8. Motion: Motion to back the EEAP proposal with the strongest recommendation. Vote taken. Unanimous consensus to back the proposal. John Garberson will bring this recommendation to the July Board meeting.
9. Staff Report: Greenhouse Gas Energy Conservation Team received a grant for recycling bins from the National Recycling Coalition and Coca-Cola. Bins can hold plastic and aluminum cans. 28 bins available to sponsors throughout the county. Outdoor burning is closed for the season due to fire danger. Staff met with Seeley working committee to discuss PM2.5.
10. Announcements: Patricia – The Democracy School workshop here in Missoula in August. Patricia will email me the link and I will forward it the council members on her behalf.
11. Meeting was adjourned.