

Meeting Minutes

Valley AIRNow Air Quality Outreach Program
Winchester-Frederick County
February 7, 2007
Northern Shenandoah Valley Air Quality Improvement Task Force

9:30-10:30 AM

Meeting held via teleconference due to inclement weather

Attendees

Moderator: Tiffany Tumer (Valley AIRNow)

Task Force Members: Patrick Barker, Gary Dove, Jim Giraytys, Ken Jones, Steve Kerr, Jeff Rezin, Mike Ball

DEQ: Dan Salkovitz

VDOT: Laurie Henley

Meeting began at 9:32 am.

1. Past Events

- Semi-annual EAC status report. No problems encountered with the submission due on December 31, 2006.
- 87th American Meteorological Society Meeting. Attended by SHENAIR in January. A poster presentation summarizing last June's Air Quality Teacher Workshop was given. The projects of several Winchester-Frederick County teachers were included and outlined during this presentation.
- Mid-Atlantic Diesel Collaborative presentation. Tiffany presented to the Collaborative via teleconference on January 24th. Details discussed in next section.

2. Outreach Output

- Valley AIRCorps program: Recruitment for AIRCorps continues to be an ongoing process. Since our last meeting, the following members have joined the program:
 - Allied Waste Services
 - Curry Chiropractic Center

Tiffany also continues to fax the Chamber of Commerce recruitment letter to all of the 2,000+ Chamber members. Curry Chiropractic Center joined as a result of this fax so Tiffany is optimistic that a handful of other businesses will enlist as well.

Mike Ball, Eastern Panhandle Air Quality Coordinator, requested a copy of the Valley AIRNow Chamber recruitment letter stating "marginal success" in previous communications with the Region 9 Chamber of Commerce. Tiffany agreed to send the file to Mr. Ball.

- Chamber of Commerce newsletter article. The regular Valley AIRNow article was submitted to appear in the upcoming February edition.

- **Valley AIRNow website updates.** Winter materials were added to www.valleyairnow.com and two new web pages were published to the site, which included:
 - Clean Diesel Network information page
 - On-line membership enrollment page.Recruitment for the Clean Diesel Network will be taking place over the upcoming months.
- **Mid-Atlantic Diesel Collaborative.** Tiffany presented to the Collaborative in January on Valley AIRNow and its newly developed program for area members of the mobile freight industry—the Clean Diesel Network. Tiffany explained that the Collaborative is an educational partnership between a variety of entities from federal, state, and local government, the private sector, and environmental groups in Virginia and other nearby states. The Collaborative is part of a national campaign to reduce diesel emissions by creating a means for these groups to stay connected and share ideas. Two workgroups within the Collaborative were joined:
 - Freight (due to the creation of the Clean Diesel Network program)
 - School Bus (due to recent collaboration and relationship with Frederick County Public Schools)For more information, visit www.dieselmidatlantic.org.
- **Clean Air Champions program.** This has been a topic of previous Task Force meetings. To remind the members of this program, Tiffany explained that Clean Air Champions (CAC) is an educational program developed by VDEQ and the American Lung Association (ALA) as a result of EPA funds to inform motorists between the ages of 16 – 38 of the relationship between air quality and proper car maintenance. One of the main messages of CAC is proper tire pressure. ALA and the Virginia Department of Education are currently in negotiations to make the CAC PowerPoint presentation a required lecture in all high school Drivers Education programs across the state.

Winchester-Frederick County and Roanoke EAC areas would serve as potential pilots for the program in terms of class implementation. This provided Valley AIRNow with a great pitch to actually gain entrance into the schools. Up to this point, Valley AIRNow has had no success in K-12 classroom outreach. Tiffany stated she has been working with Bob Wever of Frederick County Schools to “recruit” Drivers Education teachers to participate in the pilot. So far, three presentations (3 classes) have been scheduled with James Wood High School.

Patrick inquired about the name of the teacher we would be working with. Tiffany answered that the teacher’s name was Tim Combs and she would be presenting to his classes on February 21st and 22nd. She explained that the presentation would consist of a PowerPoint presentation created by DEQ/ALA, several hands-on activities that are commonly used at Valley AIRNow events, and a short discussion session on things that the students liked, didn’t like, found interesting, etc... This information and feedback would then be submitted to DEQ for inclusion in their final report to the EPA.

Tiffany stated that the fiscal year was ending soon and there were still some funds left in the budget for events. She suggested that perhaps the Task Force would be interested in using some of this money to supply these James Wood students with some type of novelty item for their participation. Since one of the main messages that the CAC program promotes is proper tire pressure, Tiffany suggested purchasing tire pressure gauges with the Valley AIRNow logo. Discussion between Tiffany and Patrick ensued over the price of the gauges (about \$0.99 from Wal-Mart), how the logo would be displayed (by using some type of small sticker), and quantity (about 100 students were expected to hear the presentation). Patrick stated that he did not see an issue with using the funds for this and that he was interested in seeing the response of the students to the overall program. Dan also mentioned that a better price for the gauges may be obtained as a result of ordering them in bulk.

- Valley AIRNow Outreach Survey. This slide included the results from a survey that was given to students who attended the Odyssey Day event in October 2006 at JMU. Tiffany explained that the survey was made available to the students on-line and consisted of about 25 questions on air quality awareness, outreach educational value (i.e. which activities were liked/disliked), behavior change, etc. Approximately 400 students attended the event and 100 of these students from 3 schools (including Millbrook High and Sherando High in Frederick County) completed the survey.

Tiffany unveiled some of the preliminary results from the survey, which included:

- Question 1: Did you go home and talk with your family or friends about what you learned at the Air Quality Station? Nearly half of the respondents answered yes. Tiffany stated that she was impressed with this number. As a result of outreach activities such as this, it appears that Valley AIRNow is not only reaching the primary audience but is also having an impact on a secondary audience as well—in this case, parents, other family members, or friends.
- Question 2: If yes, Please choose the activities that you talked about (more than one may apply). A list of the activities that they participated in the event were listed in the survey—vehicle simulator, Smog City demonstration, practice tires to learn how to properly measure tire pressure, and cubic meter model. The vehicle simulator and Smog City were found to be the two most popular activities. This provided insight into which activities Valley AIRNow should focus on at future events and outreach opportunities.
- Question 3: Have you or a family member actually checked your tire pressure since visiting the Air Quality Station? A surprising 52% answered yes. Again, Tiffany was impressed by this number and suggested that this meant we were having not just a short term impact on our audience, but a more long term impact that went beyond our outreach events. Potential behavior change may be occurring that would result in emissions reductions.

Tiffany stated that she will be working in the upcoming months to create a final report of the survey results. This report will then be posted on the Valley AIRNow website for viewing.

3. Task Force Input

- Clean Commute Day. Tiffany reminded everyone of the upcoming ozone season for 2007. If outreach was to continue into the next fiscal year, then event planning for ozone season would be required. Last year, Valley AIRNow had celebrated Clean Commute Day and Tiffany wanted to gather input on if this is something that we should continue in 2007, especially as it conflicts with Apple Blossom Festival activities.

Tiffany then listed possible Clean Commute ideas, which included:

- The “unveiling” of idling signs at schools. Frederick County Public Schools has agreed to install at least one idling sign at each school in the district. Patrick inquired about the status of Winchester City schools. Tiffany stated that she has not been able to communicate with the City school Superintendent to date. Hopefully Winchester City will see the initiative that Frederick County is taking and follow suit. Patrick suggested asking our Frederick County school contact to communicate with their Winchester City school counterpart. He believed Patty Taylor (FCPS Superintendent) to speak with Dennis Kellison (WPS Superintendent) frequently. Tiffany agreed to follow up on this.
- Enlist the help of high school environmental clubs to pass out idle reduction bumper stickers after school to idling parents waiting for school to be released. This could be a good publicity event as well if Tiffany could get The Winchester Star and Northern Virginia Daily to cover the event.
- Organize a Clean Commute Fair at a local high school. Have local businesses and organizations set-up informational booths in the auxiliary gym for students to circulate throughout the day and gather information.

Tiffany then opened the floor for discussion of these ideas. Gary Dove mentioned that he liked the idea of having the students hand out bumper stickers to idling parents. Patrick agreed that he liked the idea but the biggest challenge would be the day. He asked if it would be possible to do it before the Apple Blossom Festival so that the community would already have the bumper stickers displayed on their vehicles. Tiffany responded that last year we celebrated Clean Commute Day later in the month and that we probably wouldn't want to do it before May as May marks the beginning of ozone season.

Patrick asked the Task Force if someone was aware of the dates that the Apple Blossom Festival was scheduled for this year. Discussion of the date ensued and it was determined that the Festival was scheduled for the first week in May, the 1st – 6th. Patrick and Gary suggested trying and scheduling a Clean Commute event for the following week, May 7th – 11th when there wouldn't be as much competition in the press.

Steve Kerr also mentioned that the Commuter Services program had the resources available to support the Clean Commute Fair. Tiffany responded that organizing the Fair would be much more difficult than the other ideas, so at this point she would likely focus her energy on working with the schools on passing out bumper stickers. Patrick also suggested handing out tire pressure gauges in addition to the bumper stickers if the Valley AIRNow budget allows.

- GLOBE equipment funds. Tiffany mentioned that the current Valley AIRNow budget has about \$1,800 that was originally set aside to provide GLOBE equipment to the Winchester-Frederick County teachers who attended the air quality workshop at JMU last summer. Unfortunately, it was discovered that many of the teachers were simply unable to implement the equipment in their classrooms for a variety of reasons (i.e. principals were unwilling to sign the MOU which stated the schools were responsible for the equipment and unused equipment would be reverted back to JMU, no room for the AQ lesson in current curricula, etc). Due to the low participation rate, SHENAIR covered the costs of the schools that did sign the MOU and accept the equipment. In Winchester-Frederick County, two schools now have the GLOBE equipment—NREP and Admiral Byrd Middle.

Consequently, Tiffany stated that there is now \$1,800 in the budget to spend on a different project of the Task Force's choosing. She mentioned that the funds could be used to print additional idling signs if Winchester City schools would decide to install the signs in their school zones as well. Patrick asked what the cost of the signs would run. Tiffany was unsure but agreed to find the estimate on her computer and send to Patrick after the meeting. She believed that one metal sign would cost about \$30, not including the post. There were two posts available to choose from—wooden and metal—with the metal post costing significantly more than the wooden post. Patrick stated that he liked the idea of the metal post and the idea of the signs in general as they would serve as a long-term educational tool.

Patrick asked the Task Force for ideas on where the idle signs could be installed that would make the biggest difference. Steve Kerr suggested daycare centers as they typically have long lines of parents waiting to pick-up their children. The rest of the Task Force agreed that day care centers would be an ideal location for signs.

4. Upcoming Events

- Next Task Force meeting: April 4, 2007 at the Winchester Regional Airport.
- National Air Quality Conference: February 11 – 14 in Orlando, Florida. It was expressed that Mike Ball, Dan Salkovitz and Michael Kiss would be attending the conference as well.
- Innovative Environmental Technologies Symposium: February 22 at the Rockingham County Fairgrounds.
- JMU Earth Day: April 20
- Clean Commute Day: May 5

5. General Comments/Input

Discussion of the EAC progress report ensued which led Jeff Rezin to inquire about the potential strengthening of the ozone standard. Jeff asked what kind of effect this would have on Winchester-Frederick County. Dan stated that as of right now, it was too early to tell. He mentioned there were several new ideas (i.e. lowering the average, changing the time averaging period, having a 12-hour period from 8 am – 8 pm, lowering the standard to 70 ppb, etc) that had been floating about but that everything was very preliminary and it was too difficult right now to ascertain how this area would be

affected. Dan suggested that there would be discussion on this topic at the National Air Quality Conference and would perhaps know more then.

Jeff and Patrick suggested keeping the Task Force updated on the ozone standard review as it progressed. Dan agreed and stated that the EPA is required to review the standard on a regular basis and revisit it with any new information or data that may be available.

Tiffany asked Dan when the final report of the reviewing process would be made available to the public. Dan stated that he would forward the press release to Tiffany for distribution to the Task Force.

Mike Ball then commented that for his area, 2007 was the critical time in the Early Action Plan. Was that the same for the Winchester area? Dan answered yes. Mike then asked if the EPA has ever retroactively granted attainment status and then revoked it as a result of the lowering of the ozone standard. Discussion of this question followed. Dan mentioned again that it was too early to tell how the ozone standard would affect the EAC and non-attainment areas. For example, if the EPA went to a 12-hour averaging period, it is hard to tell if this would help our hurt our area. That it may actually end up helping our area because our ozone levels are so low in the morning. This holds true for the Richmond non-attainment area as well.

Meeting adjourned at 10:15 am.