

REGIONAL AIR QUALITY PLANNING ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MEETING SUMMARY

Thursday, March 28, 2024 – 10:00 A. M.
Houston-Galveston Area Council
Virtual Teams Meeting

<p><u>MEMBER PRESENT</u> Fort Bend County – Joel Patterson Baylor College Medicine – Winifred Hamilton American Lung Association – Charlie Gagen Waller County – Brooke Bacuetes City of Houston –Nguyen Ly Environmental Defense Fund– Grace Lewis City of Houston– Win Colbert Port Houston– Trae Camble Harris County Precinct 2 – Kristen Lee</p>	<p><u>ALTERNATE PRESENT</u> Houston Advanced Research Center – Ebrahim Eslami Port Houston –Kenneth Gathright City Of Houston –Darryl Tate Associated General Contractors of America –Marc Anderson Harris County Pollution Control–Stuart Mueller</p>
<p><u>OTHERS PRESENT</u> TCEQ– Erik Gribbin Air Alliance Houston– Inyang Uwak HCTX– Shannay Baradaren City of Houston – Jorge Gonzalez</p>	<p><u>STAFF PRESENT</u> Houston-Galveston Area Council – Andrew DeCandis Houston-Galveston Area Council – Pharr Andrews Houston-Galveston Area Council – Cassandra Marshall Houston-Galveston Area Council – Sydni Ligons Houston-Galveston Area Council – Vincent Polignano Houston-Galveston Area Council – Susan Jaworski Houston-Galveston Area Council – Marcus Tucker TCEQ – Vanessa DeArman TERP – Nate Hickman EPA – Jeffrey Riley TCEQ – Denine Calvin TCEQ – Alison Stokes TCEQ – Shantha Daniel TxDOT – Mansour Shiraz</p>

BRIEFING

Overview

- a. RAQPAC Members and Alternates were presented with agency reports (EPA Update, TCEQ Update, TERP Update and Regional Air Quality Monitoring update), and the meeting concluded with no information items and no announcements.
- b. Go to <http://www.h-gac.com/board-of-directors/advisory-committees/regional-air-quality-planning-advisory-committee/meeting-material.aspx> to view the meeting materials for this meeting.

CALL TO ORDER

ITEM 1A. Introduction

Joel Patterson called the meeting to order, and members were introduced.

ITEM 1B. Approval of Meeting Summary (02-29-2024)

Meeting summary approved.

AGENCY REPORTS

ITEM 2A. EPA Update – (Jeff Riley)

A representative from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) briefed the committee:

Light & Medium-Duty Vehicles Multi-Pollutant Emissions Standards, Model Years 2027 & Later

On March 20, 2024, EPA announced a final rule, Multi-Pollutant Emissions Standards for Model Years 2027 and Later Light-Duty and Medium-Duty Vehicles, that sets new, more protective standards to build on existing federal greenhouse gas (GHG) and Tier 3 standards for these vehicles. The vehicles covered by this rule are passenger cars & light trucks, as well as larger pickups & vans (medium-duty, also known as Class 2b and 3 vehicles). These new standards will significantly reduce air pollutant emissions (not just GHGs, but criteria pollutants and air toxics as well) starting with model year (MY) 2027, and fully phase-in over a 6-year period between MY 2027 through MY 2032. The standards will provide important health benefits to millions of people nationwide, including both urban and rural communities near major roadways, which are disproportionately exposed to air pollution from motor vehicles.

For light-duty vehicles (LDVs), these new standards are projected to result in an industry-wide average target for the light-duty fleet of 85 grams/mile (g/mile) of CO₂ in MY 2032, representing a nearly 50% reduction in projected fleet average emissions target levels relative to EPA's existing federal GHG MY 2023-MY 2026 standards. For medium-duty vehicles (MDVs), EPA is revising the existing GHG standards for MY 2027 and establishing new standards for MYs 2028-2032, a six-year phase-in period from MY 2027-MY 2032. When fully phased in, the MDV standards will represent a 44% reduction in projected fleet average emissions target levels relative to the existing MY 2026 standards.

Beyond the revised GHG standards, EPA has finalized "Tier 4" criteria pollutant emissions standards for non-methane organic gases (NMOG), NO_x, PM, and other criteria pollutants and their precursors.

For LDVs, EPA is finalizing:

- NMOG plus NO_x standards that by MY 2032 will represent a 50% reduction from the existing 30 mg/mi standards for MY 2025 established in the Tier 3 rule in 2014.
- A PM standard to be fully phased-in by MY 2030, reducing tailpipe PM emissions from gasoline vehicles by over 95% in addition to reducing mobile source air toxics.

For MDVs, EPA is finalizing:

- NMOG+NO_x standards that represent a 58% reduction & 70% reduction from the Tier 3 standards for Class 2b & Class 3 vehicles, respectively by MY 2033.
- A PM standard to be fully phased-in by MY 2031, reducing tailpipe PM emissions from gasoline vehicles by over 95% in addition to reducing mobile source air toxics.

These final standards are technology-neutral/performance-based standards for cars/SUVs/light pickup trucks & medium-duty larger pickups & vans for MYs 2027-2032. EPA expects that manufacturers will choose to produce a diverse range of clean vehicles under the standards, including cleaner gasoline vehicles, hybrids (HEVs), and plug-in hybrid electric vehicles (PHEVs), and full battery electric vehicles (BEVs). Under the performance-based emissions standards, manufacturers choose the mix of technologies they believe is best suited for their fleets to meet the standards.

The prepublication Final Rule is available on EPA's dedicated webpage for Regulations for Emissions from Vehicles and Engines, as well as a supporting [fact sheet](#), [regulatory impact analysis](#) (contains discussion of associated costs), [response to comments document](#) (also contains cost discussions), [Air Quality Analysis memo to the docket](#), and [EPA's OMEGA model runs & files supporting the final rule's benefit-cost & effects analysis](#). For more information, see: <https://www.epa.gov/regulations-emissions-vehicles-and-engines/final-rule-multi-pollutant-emissions-standards-model>

ITEM 2B. TCEQ Update – (Vanessa DeArman)

TCEQ staff gave an update to the members on the latest information:

Houston-Galveston-Brazoria (HGB) 2008 Eight-Hour Ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standard (NAAQS) Attainment Demonstration and Reasonable Further Progress State Implementation Plan (SIP) Revisions, and Associated Rules

On November 29, 2023, the commission approved the proposal of the executive director’s recommended HGB severe area attainment demonstration and reasonable further progress SIP revisions and proposed rulemakings to 30 Texas Administrative Code (TAC) Chapter 115 and Chapter 117.

The HGB 2008 eight-hour ozone NAAQS SIP proposal documents are available at the [HGB Latest Ozone Planning Activities](https://www.tceq.texas.gov/airquality/sip/hgb/latest-ozone) webpage (<https://www.tceq.texas.gov/airquality/sip/hgb/latest-ozone>).

The TCEQ held a public hearing in Houston on January 4, 2024, at 7:00 p.m. at the Houston-Galveston Area Council. The public comment period closed on January 16, 2024, and staff are evaluating comments received during the public comment period.

The anticipated adoption date for these SIPs is April 24, 2024.

Revised Fine Particulate Matter (PM_{2.5}) NAAQS

On February 7, 2024, EPA finalized its revision of the annual PM_{2.5} NAAQS to 9.0 µg/m³ and published in the *Federal Register* on March 6, 2024.

Estimated timeline as provided by EPA (https://www.epa.gov/system/files/documents/2024-02/pm-naaqs_designations-memo_2.7.2024-_jg-signed.pdf).

- Final NAAQS revision promulgated: February 7, 2024
- State designations due to EPA: February 7, 2025
- 120-day letter from EPA to Governor: Early October 2025
- Anticipated final designations: February 6, 2026
- Attainment date: December 2032

TCEQ plans to hold informational meetings and take informal public comment on the state designations considered by the commission before being sent to the Governor for his consideration for submittal to EPA.

2023 Point Source Emissions Inventories (EIs) Due Monday, April 1, 2024

For questions regarding the 2023 EI submissions, please contact the EI program at psinvent@tceq.texas.gov or at 512 239-1773.

Since TCEQ will be closed at noon on Friday, March 29 in observation of Good Friday, staff will be available for questions on Friday, March 29 from 8:00 am – 12:00 pm. Normal business hours will resume on Monday, April 1, from 8:00 am – 5:00 pm.

Environmental Trade Fair and Conference (ETFC)

The ETFC will be held May 14-15, 2024, at the Austin Convention Center. During the two-day Conference, agency staff will lead over 100 courses and discussions. Topics include air and water permitting, oil and gas, industrial and solid waste management, compliance and enforcement, and remediation programs.

Attendee and exhibitor registration is open. For more information, please visit the [Environmental Trade Fair and Conference](https://www.tceq.texas.gov/p2/events/etfc/etf.html) webpage (<https://www.tceq.texas.gov/p2/events/etfc/etf.html>).

TCEQ Announces 2024 Texas Environmental Excellence Award (TEEA) Winners

Since 1993, the TEEA program is an annual awards program that recognizes environmental preservation and protection achievements and has honored more than 250 successful environmental projects and activities. These awards help inspire others to take steps to become better environmental stewards in their communities.

The selected winners have implemented innovative projects geared toward environmental sustainability, preventing pollution, and protecting Texas. TCEQ will recognize this year’s winners and finalists at the annual awards banquet in Austin on May 15. TCEQ would like to congratulate this year’s winners and finalists, the full list can be found at www.TEEA.org.

- Civic/Community: Keep San Angelo Beautiful, San Angelo — Tires-To-Go
- Education: Keep Irving Beautiful Irving — KIB Environmental Education
- **Environmental Educator of the Year: Venessa Wallace, Peet Junior High, Conroe - Wildlife Management Teacher**
- Innovative Operations/Management: Parkland Health, Dallas — Holistic Energy Management Framework
- **Individual: Don and Penny Johnson, Missouri City — Lifetime Environmental Education Efforts**
- **Pollution Prevention: Port of Houston, Houston — Port of Houston’s Carbon Neutrality, Electrification, and Sustainability Work**
- Technical/Technology: Trinity River Authority of Texas – Information Technology, Arlington — Digital Twin
- Water Conservation: Tarrant Regional Water District, Fort Worth — Learn and Grow Program
- Youth: Ella Elkins, San Angelo — Plastic Recycling Project

ITEM 2C. TERP Update (Nate Hickman)

TERP staff gave an update to the members on the latest information:
Texas Emissions Reduction Plan (TERP)

On March 22, 2024, TCEQ closed the [Light-Duty Motor Vehicle Purchase or Lease Incentive Program \(LDPLIP\)](#), and the [Alternative Fueling Facilities Program \(AFFP\)](#).

The [Texas Hydrogen Infrastructure, Vehicle, and Equipment Program \(THIVE\)](#) closes on March 30, 2024. THIVE grants will be awarded competitively in eligible counties for hydrogen vehicles, equipment, and refueling infrastructure.

TCEQ is currently accepting applications under the [Texas Clean School Bus Program \(TCSB\)](#) until the earlier of October 14, 2024, or all available funds have been requested, with up to \$20 million available on a first-come, first-served basis to upgrade or replace older diesel school buses with new models.

Coming Soon:

- *TCEQ plans to open the Diesel Emissions Reduction Incentives (DERI) listed below in May of this year, with an estimated \$150 million in grants available across the two programs:*
 - [Emissions Reduction Incentive Grants \(ERIG\)](#) will offer grants to repower or replace older locomotives, marine vessels, stationary equipment, or select non-road equipment to reduce NOx emissions in ozone nonattainment areas and affected counties in Texas (competitive selection).
 - [Rebate Grants Program](#) will offer grants in eligible counties to upgrade or replace diesel heavy-duty vehicles and non-road equipment on a first-come, first-served basis (first-come, first-served selection).
- Visit www.terpgrants.org for the latest information on new program openings and other announcements, as well as program requirements, application forms, and project summary reports. Contact TERP staff by phone at (800) 919-TERP (8377) or by email at terp@tceq.texas.gov.

Texas Volkswagen Environmental Mitigation Plan (TxVEMP) Program

Currently Open: [TxVEMP All-Electric Grant Program](#) with over \$50 million remaining to upgrade or replace qualifying vehicles and equipment operating in eligible areas with new electric models. Grants can reimburse up to:

- 100% of the cost for government entities
- 75% of the incremental cost for non-government entities
- Eligible project categories include the replacement or repower of:
 - Class 8 Local Freight Trucks and Port Drayage Trucks
 - Class 4-8 School Bus, Shuttle Bus, or Transit Bus
 - Class 4-7 Local Freight Trucks

- Airport Ground Support Equipment
 - Forklifts and Port Cargo Handling Equipment
 - Applicants purchasing on-road vehicles or non-road equipment may request additional funding for electric charging or hydrogen refueling infrastructure.
- [Sign up for TxVEMP updates](#) to learn more about this program. Please contact us at 1-800-919-8377 or VWsettle@tceq.texas.gov with any questions.
 - Visit www.txvwfund.org for the latest information on new program openings and other announcements, as well as program requirements, application forms, and project summary reports.

ITEM 2D. Regional Air Quality Monitoring Update– (Andrew DeCandis)

Andrew notified the committee members that all these charts can be found on the “RAQPAC Meeting Agendas and Materials” website under the heading for today’s meeting. Since our last meeting in February, there have been no exceedances of either the 2008 75 ppb ground-level ozone or the 2015 70 ppb standard.

So far, in 2024 the region’s maximum 4th highest value was 57 ppb as measured at the Conroe Relocated monitor. Followed by 56 at the Galveston 99th street monitor. Also, the YTD regional design value for the 2022 through 2024 period was 74 ppb as measured at the Houston Bayland Park monitor.

Moving on to monitoring of PM2.5 values, you can see the monthly PM2.5 concentrations for all the region’s regulatory particulate monitors over the last year. There’s been a spike from Baytown, slightly off the charts, I have also added a dashed line to represent the new 7 micrograms per cubic meter standard.

ACTION ITEMS

ITEM 3A.

None

DISCUSSION ITEMS

ITEM 4A. North Wayside Particulate Matter Update – (Erik Gribbin, TCEQ)

Erik Gribbin presented the North Wayside particulate matter speciated sampling, detailing the data collection process, including the sampling duration and analysis methods, and presenting the results of the PMF analysis. Mr. Gribbin also discussed the specifics of the North Wayside Monitor's location, providing a comprehensive overview of its proximity to Loop 610 and the nearby sources of concern, such as Gold Star Metals, Invictus Transport, and Accelerate Truck Lines. He further elaborated on additional sources within a mile and a half radius and expanded on the variety of point sources within a five-mile radius.

Mr. Gribbin presented comprehensive data analysis findings for the period of July 2022 to June 2023, indicating that a significant percentage of days at the monitoring site exceeded the new PM NAC standard. He further explored the impact of wind direction on pollutant concentrations and provided insights into the top 10 compounds and species observed. Gribbin also provided a detailed overview of the analysis of PMF model results, explaining the process of using PMF to identify constituent source profiles and the challenges involved in filtering out individual compounds or species.

He discussed the identification of eight source profiles that account for most of the PM2.5 at North Wayside and highlighted the close match between the modeled PM2.5 mass based on PMF results and the observed PM2.5 mass. Finally, Mr. Gribbin presented a comprehensive analysis of the source profiles contributing to pollution, highlighting the composition and time series of each profile over the sampling period, and outlining the next steps, including the implementation of the new PM 2.5 standard and potential outreach meetings for the designation process in the Texas area.

ITEM 4B. RAQPAC Health Subcommittee Discussion – (Charlie Gagen, ALA, and Dr. Grace Lewis, EDG)

Discussion began with Grace Lewis informing the committee member that Charlie Gagen will Co-Chair the work with the committee that they are putting together. She further elaborated on RAQPAC Health Subcommittee that is being put together. It was further explained that they're interested in looking at the intersection of air quality and health. RAQPAC could benefit from knowing how air quality impacts health. In closing, members were solicited for participation in developing a steering committee, which will include RAQPAC, but also other academic and nonprofits, and community-based organizations to participate in the committee as well.

INFORMATION ITEMS

ITEM 5A.

None

ANNOUNCEMENTS

ITEM 6A.

None

NEW BUSINESS

ITEM 7A.

Next meeting: April 25, 2024

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 11:31 A.M.