



**EAST-WEST GATEWAY
Council of Governments**

Creating Solutions Across Jurisdictional Boundaries

**AGENDA
AIR QUALITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE*
TUESDAY, AUGUST 25, 2020
10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.
VIRTUAL MEETING – GOTOMEETING**

DUE TO COVID-19 OUTBREAK, EAST-WEST GATEWAY’S OFFICES ARE CURRENTLY CLOSED TO THE PUBLIC AND WILL BE UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE

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I. Call to Order

- Carol Lawrence, Chair, East-West Gateway Council of Governments
- A. Minutes of June 23, 2020 Meeting

II. Citizens for Modern Transit Activities and Programs

- Mallory Box, Citizens for Modern Transit

III. 2020 Ozone Season Snapshot

- East-West Gateway Council of Governments

IV. Update Activities of the States

- Illinois Environmental Protection Agency
- Missouri Department of Natural Resources

V. Other Business –

- Next Meeting October 27, 2020

VI. Adjournment

* Please note that this meeting will serve as a part of the Inter-Agency Consultation

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St. Charles County

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Ruth Springer
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Donald R. Summers, Jr.
St. Louis County

Michael Walters
Madison County

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St. Charles County

Regional Citizens

Barbara Geisman

C. William Grogan

John A. Laker

Ron Williams

Non-voting Members

Holly Bieneman

Illinois Department of Transportation

Vacant

Illinois Department of Commerce

and Economic Opportunity

Patrick McKenna

Missouri Department of Transportation

Taulby Roach

Bi-State Development

Aaron Willard

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MINUTES
AIR QUALITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Tuesday, June 23, 2020
10:00 am – 11:00 am
VIRTUAL MEETING - GoToMeeting

Members Present:

Carol Lawrence, Chair – East-West Gateway Council of Governments
Kevin Jemison – Illinois Department of Transportation
Jack Fishman – St. Louis University
David Bloomberg – Illinois Environmental Protection Agency
Kathrina Donegan – St. Louis County Department of Health
Michael Henderson – Missouri Department of Transportation
Christopher Schmidt – Illinois Department of Transportation
Susannah Fuchs – American Lung Association
Jeanine Arrighi – City of St. Louis Health Department
Mark Leath – Missouri Department of Natural Resources

Others Present:

Dr. Christine Ekenga – Washington University
Francisco Cortalezzi – Missouri Department of Natural Resources
Catherine Werner – City of St. Louis
Christine Favilla – Sierra Club, Piasa Palisades Chapter
Jed Wolkins – U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Region 7
Michael Hutchenson – Ameren
Andy Knott – Sierra Club Missouri
Kevin Herdler – St. Louis Regional Clean Cities Program
Cathy Monroe – Federal Transit Administration Region 7
Dennis Bachman – Federal Highway Administration, Illinois
Jeremy Tanz – Southeast Missouri Regional Planning Commission
Linden Mueller – Great Rivers Environmental Law Center

Staff:

Mary Grace Lewandowski Jennifer Vuitel Aaron Young Lubna Shoaib
Maureen McCarthy

1. Call to Order

- Carol Lawrence, Chair, East-West Gateway Council of Governments

The meeting of the Air Quality Advisory Committee (AQAC) was called to order by Chair Carol Lawrence, East-West Gateway Council of Governments (EWG). The minutes of the May 26, 2020 AQAC meeting were approved as circulated.

2. St. Louis Area Cancer Risk Air Toxics Spatial Analysis Study

- Dr. Christine Ekenka, Washington University

Dr. Christine Ekenka is a chronic disease epidemiologist and is a member of the public health faculty at Washington University. Her focus is on the connection between environmental and occupational hazards and health outcomes. Environmental justice, a combination of the Civil Rights Movement and the Environmental Movement, is a foundation of Dr. Ekenka's study on cancer risk from air toxics.

The Civil Rights Act of 1964 outlawed discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, or national origin. In 1968 one of the first major environmental justice protests took place when Memphis sanitation workers went on strike. Martin Luther King participated in the Memphis Sanitation Strike to support occupational, environmental, and economic rights for the workers. The starting point of the environmental justice movement is considered to be when hundreds of environmentalists and civil rights activists protested against the construction of a landfill in a predominately black neighborhood in Warren County North Carolina. Following the protests in North Carolina the U.S. government commissioned a study looking at hazardous waste landfills in eight southeast states. The study found that 75 percent of the landfills in those states were placed in majority black neighborhoods and only 20 percent of the population in that region was black. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) defined environmental justice as the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies.

Through community partnerships between Washington University, BJC, and the Siteman Cancer Center members of the community were able to express their longstanding concerns about geographic disparity and the connection between environmental issues and cancer. Sites like the Bridgeton Landfill and Cold Water Creek in north St. Louis County are the center of the community member's concerns. Studies have revealed that the highest levels of certain cancers were found in North St. Louis County. A doctoral student conducted a study where he interviewed residents of north St. Louis City and County about their perspectives of environmental hazards. The hazards identified by the residents were violent crime, flooding, and air quality. The black residents also identified race as a concern. The results of this study led to the university taking an empirical look at the hazards mentioned by the residents, starting with air quality.

Air toxics are pollutants that may cause cancer and serious health problems and have adverse ecological effects. Some of these toxins can persist in the environment for decades after they have been released and have the potential to build up in our bodies over time and can lead to chronic health issues. The EPA developed the National Air Toxics Assessment (NATA) to characterize air toxics across the nation and have identified 180 hazardous air toxins. NATA is a database that utilizes census tract resolution, emissions modeling, and cancer risk estimates based on chronic exposures. It allows the public to better understand the air toxics problem in the U.S. and in their own communities.

Environmental research often fails to recognize the important variations of segregation levels across local areas or neighborhoods. Dr. Ekenga linked census data to EPA data and looked at how people are spatially distributed in the St. Louis region. Local spatial segregation indexes have rarely been incorporated in health research. Using spatial distribution gives a better idea of who is being exposed to environmental factors.

Dr. Ekenga's research focused on 615 census tracts in St. Louis region (14 counties in Missouri and Illinois). By using the EPA's NATA data and combining it with the census tract data, it became evident which populations are being exposed to the most air toxics. It was revealed that it is five times more likely that census tracts with high levels of black residents and those in poverty are being exposed to high levels of air toxics than areas with white middle-class residents.

There are several theories to address relationship between segregation and pollution. One theory is that polluting industries are more often located in disenfranchised communities with minority residents, poor residents, and residents with limited power to affect the decision-making processes that determine where such industries are placed. Another theory is that in the past there might have been differential enforcement of environmental regulations that facilitate the entry of polluting industries leading to racialized zoning policies. Both theories rely on the fact that decreased property values due to the close proximity of the polluting industries leads to a cycle of vulnerability for the residents of those neighborhoods.

Promoting environmental justice could help solve these issues. Efforts to reduce pollution should be accompanied by efforts to decrease segregation. It is recommended that air quality monitoring in air toxics hot spots be increased and have community partnerships help to identify sources and effective ways to reduce pollution. Better community planning and the addition of things like green spaces, electric buses, and stricter vehicle emissions standards would create a cleaner environment for those living in hot spots.

NATA allows the public to better understand the air toxics problem in the U.S. and in their communities. It provides a starting point for local-scale assessments and helps to focus community efforts. The database informs monitoring programs and helps to identify public health and policy initiatives that can alleviate the sources of environmental inequality. If there are any questions about Dr. Ekenga's research, she can be contacted at ekengac@wustl.edu and on Twitter @DrEkenga.

3. American Fuels Report

- Kevin Herdler, St. Louis Regional Clean Cities Program

Mr. Herdler presented the findings from his 2019 Transportation Technology Deployment report submitted to the U.S. Department of Energy. During 2019 in the St. Louis area there were 20 million gallons of gasoline displaced. Alternative fuels accounted for half of those displaced gallons of gasoline. The other factors that contributed to the reduction of gasoline usage were vehicle miles traveled reductions, increased use of hybrid vehicles, fuel economy improvements,

and a reduction of vehicle idling. As for the type of alternative fuels used, biodiesel made up 33 percent, CNG made up 44 percent, natural gas made up 15 percent, and the rest came from E85, electric, propane, and hybrid technology. As a historical comparison, in 2009 there were three million gallons of gasoline displaced.

Based on this displacement, there were 146,557 tons of greenhouse gas emissions reduced in 2019. A reduction in idling made up 46 percent of the reductions. The rest of the reduction can be attributed to alternative fuel vehicles and fuel economy improvements. The criteria greenhouse gas pollutants are chemicals that have been linked to adverse health effects and therefore began being regulated as part of the Clean Air Act of 1970. The pollutants include NOX, VOCs, and particulate matter.

Clean Cities also collects data on their outreach events and it is estimated that 433,736 people were reached during Clean Cities events/activities in 2019.

4. Update Activities of the States

- David Bloomberg, Illinois Environmental Protection Agency

The ozone levels in Illinois have been high. The Chicago area is very close to violating the 2008 ozone standard due to a high number of exceedances at their monitors.

- Mark Leath, Missouri Department of Natural Resources

As of June 12, 2020 Stacy Allen has taken a position with Ameren and no longer works at MoDNR. Francisco Cortellezi is a newer member of the Air Program's State Implementation Plan Unit and may become a contact for the air program.

The Missouri side of the St. Louis region has seen a total of six exceedances through June 21, 2020. Five of those exceedances happened the weekend of June 6 – 7. The West Alton monitor and the Maryland Heights monitor each have two exceedances. St. Louis is still a marginal non-attainment area under the 2015 ozone standard. 2020 is an important monitoring year due to the attainment deadline being August 2021 (2018-2020 monitor data). If the region does not attain the standard in 2020, it is likely it could be reclassified as a moderate non-attainment area.

Both the April 29 and May 28 Missouri Air Conservation Commission (MACC) meetings were held virtually. At the April 29 meeting there was one adoption item, the boundary recommendations for the 2010 sulfur dioxide (SO₂) standard in New Madrid and Iron Counties. Attainment was recommended for Iron County based on the data. For New Madrid, a non-attainment area was recommended because the monitors were in violation and the boundaries encompass two SO₂ sources in that area of New Madrid. At the May 28 meeting there were eight rule adoptions. The Air Quality Analysis Section chief provided his annual report on emissions and monitoring data across the state for the past year. He also showed some preliminary analysis to determine if a measureable impact on air pollutants can be seen due to COVID-19. Nothing can be made conclusive at this point, but there may be a slight change in pollutant levels.

The next MACC is scheduled for July 30 and planned to be held at the St. Louis Regional office. There will be a way to participate virtually. Information on whether it will be an in-person or virtual meeting will be sent out at a later time. At the July meeting there will be two items up for public hearing. One of them has to do with an SO₂ source in Franklin County, the Ameren Labadie Power Plant. It is being requested that that area be redesignated from unclassifiable to attainment under the 2010 SO₂ standard. The Labadie Power Plant has four monitors installed around it and the data is showing compliance with the standard. The other item up for public hearing is a lead SIP revision for the Glover area in Iron County. That is the site of a historic primary lead smelter that has not been in operation since 2004. There are not any adoptions scheduled for the July meeting. The Air Program has requested that the commission allow them to move forward with a rulemaking that will eventually change the fees based on new emissions rates. There will be a meeting scheduled earlier in July to handle the fee issue.

5. Other Business

The June OneSTL Sustainability Lab will be held via Zoom. It will be a ‘Shark Tank’ style project pitch from three startups associated with T-Rex that are working on sustainability projects related to food, materials, and energy. More information can be found at onestl.org.

A Sustainability Summit was being planned for November 2020, but due to COVID-19 it will be postponed to November 2021. In the meantime there will be online workshops related to sustainability. OneSTL is also working with Crossroads to provide a series of anti-racism workshops primarily for the environmental groups in the St. Louis region. Historically, environmental groups have not included the voices of minority groups and there are people interested in correcting this. Once those workshops are scheduled, the information will be made available.

There were six exceedances of the 2015 eight-hour ozone standard over three days, June 6, 7, and 18. The monitors located just outside the non-attainment area, the transport-tracking monitors, recorded three exceedances over two days.

6. Adjournment

The next meeting will be on August 25, 2020. There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned.