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Clean Air Coalition Announces Clean Air Status for Dane County
Governor Doyle Letter to EPA Demonstrates Compliance With Fine Particle Standard

New Healthy Air Employer Network and Website Kicks Off Effort to Further Improve Air Quality

The Dane County Clean Air Coalition (CAC) today announced that Dane County has met U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) public health standards for fine particles. As a result, by May CAC officials anticipate Dane County being removed from the list of 211 counties nationwide that were designated by EPA in December 2008 as “nonattainment areas” under new and more stringent federal fine particle standards.

In a letter this week from Governor Doyle to EPA, Doyle cites recent 2006-2008 air monitoring data that has resulted in Dane, Brown and Columbia Counties attaining the fine particle pollution standard. Doyle requested EPA to remove the three counties from the nonattainment list.

“The State has historically been a national leader in improving air quality and has put in place many critical air pollution regulations,” Governor Doyle said in the letter to EPA. “The result of these past actions has born fruit with an improvement in air quality in Wisconsin in recent years.”

EPA adopted new regulations lowering the fine particle standard from 65 micrograms per cubic meter (ug/m^3) to 35 ug/m^3 . The standard was revised based on a number of health studies showing that short-term exposure to fine particle pollution is associated with increased mortality and a range of serious health effects, including aggravation of lung disease, asthma attacks, and heart problems. Recently, the Department of Natural Resources submitted information to EPA showing that Dane County’s new three-year fine particle emission level is 34 ug/m^3 – in compliance with the public health standard. The previous 2005-2007 emission level was 37 ug/m^3 .

Fine particle pollution is a complex mixture of extremely small particles with a diameter less than 2.5 microns – about 1/30th the diameter of a human hair. Major contributors to fine particle pollution include diesel trucks, passenger cars, off-road equipment, electric power generation, open burning and agricultural sources.

“Dane County Clean Air Coalition partners have made tremendous progress towards improving the quality of air we breathe in Dane County, but there is more work to be done,” said Dane County Executive Kathleen Falk. “We can not take our clean air status for granted. The three Clean Air Action

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Madison Gas & Electric Company / Madison Metropolitan School District / University of Wisconsin-Madison / Wisconsin Department of Administration
Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services / Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources / Wisconsin Petroleum Council
Wisconsin Petroleum Marketers and Convenience Stores Association

Days we have called in past month is evidence we can't let our guard down. Our proactive, preventative effort is important for our health, our environment and our economy."

"Madison and Dane County are doing more than ever to combat air pollution, and air quality is improving as a result. Nevertheless in light of more stringent public health standards, we must work even harder to ensure that we are doing everything possible to protect the health of all our citizens," said Madison Mayor Dave Cieslewicz.

The new *Healthy Air Employer Network* will implement a variety of measures such as promoting clean commute alternatives to their employees and retooling operations and maintenance practices to reduce emissions that contribute to air pollution. Because employers are well positioned to educate and empower their employees, *Healthy Air Employer Network* staff will provide free, one-on-one assistance to design and implement customized air quality improvement plans.

The *Healthy Air Employer Network* will provide results-oriented information on what works in Dane County, so businesses can best motivate their employees to try alternative commuting methods such as carpooling, vanpooling, riding the bus or biking to work, as well as implementing policies that reduce emissions from their operational and maintenance practices.

"Healthy air means a healthier economy, which is a win-win for Dane County residents," said Jennifer Alexander, President of the Greater Madison Chamber of Commerce. "Air pollution hurts our economy. If Dane County were to exceed federal air pollution standards, it would mean the burden of mandatory regulations to reduce air pollution that could cost Dane County citizens and businesses millions of dollars each year. Joining the Healthy Air Employer Network is a great way for businesses to impact our air quality and promote employee initiatives to reduce air pollution."

The *Healthy Air Employer Network* is funded by a grant from the UW School of Medicine and Public Health Partnership Fund for a Healthy Future.

Dane County employers can sign up to become a member of the *Healthy Air Employer Network* at www.healthyardane.org.

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