

RAQPC Action Item Summary

RAQPC Bylaws: Article 2: Section 2

2. Review and make recommendations to H-GAC Board of Directors on proposed air quality rules, regulations and guidances.

Discussion:

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) proposed lowering the primary National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for Ozone (O₃) in March of 2008 from 0.084 parts per million (ppm) to 0.075 ppm. The new administration chose to reconsider the new standard before the rule became final; however, the 8-hour O₃ standard was lowered to 0.80 ppm. On January 19, 2010, EPA proposed to revise the 8-hour standard somewhere in the range of 0.060 ppm to 0.070 ppm O₃.

Current data shows the region is currently meeting the 0.080 ppm standard. However, strengthening the ozone standards to the 0.060 ppm to 0.070 ppm range will cause the HGB area to continue to be a nonattainment area, and extend the additional compliance responsibilities, such as being subjected to SIP procedures.

Summary:

The Regional Air Quality Planning Committee (RAQPC) subcommittee met twice to construct a suggested response. The response addresses concerns that a strengthened NAAQS will cause, instead of suggesting a specific number in the 0.060 ppm to 0.070 ppm range. The subcommittee identified the following concerns:

- Need for more guidance on background levels
- Regional progress in reducing ozone levels to date
- Added competition for resources
- A disconnect with federal engine standards and the SIP process
- Consideration of workload for local, state, and federal agencies

RAQPC Bylaws: Article 2: Section 5

5. Receive public comment and assist in disseminating public information on air quality issues, plans, and programs.

Discussion:

The Air Quality Reference Guide is a document that managed by RAQPC. It is to provide interested citizens and organizations with accurate and up-to-date information about air pollution in the greater Houston area. The last version of the Air Quality Reference Guide was completed in 2002.

Updating the Air Quality Reference Guide is a valuable effort for both the region and RAQPC. RAQPC may be recognized as being the home for creating a comprehensive, current, updatable, and user friendly document. The goal is to bring consistency across the region by developing a common pool of information.

Summary:

H-GAC staff researched the document to identify the areas of the document that needed updating. The H-GAC staff then researched the areas, and incorporated the updates. A subcommittee met to review the updates, and perform a general edit. The resulting document may be found at <http://www.cleanairaction.org/AQ2010DRFT1BK/DFT01AQ.html>.

It is important to note that the language in the 2002 version has remained unaltered as much as possible.

It is anticipated that the document will be available for downloading during the Greater Houston Partnership Forum in April.