



Clean Air Congress VOICE

SPRING 2005

Research Proves Air Pollution's Harmful Effects on Children's Lungs



Children living in the most polluted communities in Southern California are at greater long-term risk of having lung disease and other life-threatening respiratory problems according to the Children's Health Study, an eight-year research project conducted by the University of Southern California (USC).

Between 1993 and 2001, scientists from the Keck School of Medicine at USC tracked levels of major pollutants in 12 Southern California communities while following the pulmonary health of 1,759 children as they progressed from 4th grade to 12th grade.

Researchers at USC say that the region's mix of tailpipe pollution and hovering dust, a common pollutant in the Coachella Valley, is stunting lung growth among children who are raised in smoggy areas. The study found that about 8 percent of the 18-year-olds had lung capacity less than 80 percent, compared with 1.5 percent in communities with the least pollution.

Air pollution monitoring stations were established in each of the study communities collecting continuous data on levels of several common pollutants, such as ozone, nitrogen dioxide, and PM2.5 found in car and truck exhaust pipes, factories and power plants.

Researchers are unsure how air pollution may retard lung development. It is believed, however, that chronic inflammation



and irritating small airways on a daily basis may play a role. Scientists also suspect that pollutants might dampen the growth of alveoli – tiny air sacs in the lungs.

The research team will continue to follow the study participants into their early 20s, when their lungs will mature and stop developing entirely. The team will also monitor whether the participants begin to experience respiratory symptoms and if those who moved away from a polluted environment show benefits.

For more information on USC studies on smog or the effects of smog, visit the University of Southern California website at <http://www.usc.edu>.

Upcoming Event – Clean Air Vehicle Showcase



As part of its environmental program, ABC Radio has invited AQMD to partner for the **CLEAN AIR VEHICLE SHOWCASE**, which is scheduled for Sunday, May 15th beginning at 10 a.m. at the Santa Monica Promenade. The public is invited to this **FREE** event to view a wide array of environmentally-friendly vehicles.

The **CLEAN AIR VEHICLE SHOWCASE** will offer the public an opportunity to learn about new products and technologies automotive manufacturers are and will be using to produce cleaner vehicles that address consumers' growing concerns about the environment. The event will feature hybrid and Clean Air Choice vehicles, as well as cars of the future, such as hydrogen powered fuel cell vehicles.

KABC Talk Radio on-air personality, Leon Kaplan, "The Motorman" will moderate the event. Leon will also broadcast **LIVE** from 8-11 a.m. at the Wilshire Avenue block of the Promenade. There will be complimentary snacks and beverages and 'green' prizes.

For more information, please contact Patrician Price at (909) 396-2690 or e-mail pprice@aqmd.gov.

2004 Cleanest Smog Season on Record

Thanks to cooler weather this past summer and continued progress in air pollution control programs, the Southland experienced its cleanest smog season in 25 years. In 2004, there were 27 days when ozone levels exceeded the federal one-hour standard, compared to 68 days in 2003.

Unlike 2003, when unusually hot weather brought poor air quality, this past summer's moderate temperatures helped make this the cleanest smog season on record. Cleaner cars, businesses and industries also have helped drive a long-term trend of air quality improvement.

Calendar Contest Winners Honored

On January 14th AQMD Executive Officer Barry Wallerstein presented the winners of the 2005 "Color My World With Healthy Air" Calendar Contest with \$50 gift checks for their winning artwork featured on each month.

The winners are Amanda Woodhouse, 11; Eileen Lo, 13; Emily Henry, 14; Kristie Yang, 9; Georgiana Bortis, 8; Megan Tuyen Le, 14; Jamie Baniwas, 9; Jing Liu, 16; Laura Schmaeler, 8; William Yang, 7; Mariel De Pablos Velez, 9; and Sarah Jung, 16. Winner Emily Henry and her family are Clean Air Congress members.



The grand prize winner, Brittany Relf, 16, received a bicycle and a \$100 gift check for the cover artwork.

Public Affairs Assistant Deputy Executive Officer Oscar Abarca welcomed the winners,

their parents and some of their teachers. The group then heard a presentation on air quality by Public Advisor Dr. Anupom Ganguli and toured the AQMD facility.

The 2005 AQMD Calendar Contest drew entries from Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside and San Bernardino counties. Students ranging from grades K-12 created artwork depicting their ideas of a world that is healthy, with clean air.

If you would like to request a complimentary calendar, e-mail cleanaircongress@aqmd.gov or call Patrician Price at (909) 396-2690. Calendars are also available at the Public Information Center at the AQMD headquarters, 21865 Copley Drive, Diamond Bar.



"AQMD IS CLEARING THE AIR" PROGRAM REVEALED

AQMD Governing Board Chairman William A. Burke recently announced an innovative "AQMD is Clearing the Air" program for 2005 to engage residents and opinion leaders in a dialogue on how to speed up progress in the war on smog.

Burke delivered his "State of the Air" remarks at the AQMD's first Board meeting of the year, partially in response to last year's landmark USC Children's Health Study (*see front page story*). The research showed that many children growing up in Southern California may suffer permanently underdeveloped lungs as a result of breathing smog.

Throughout 2005, each of the AQMD's 12 Governing Board members will be offered the opportunity to speak out on a variety of pressing air quality issues. Standing behind a podium wrapped with colorful "AQMD is Clearing the Air" artwork, they will address such hot-button issues as air pollution from the ports and railroads, environmental justice and others.

The initiative includes:

- Unprecedented plans to hold "mobile" AQMD Board meetings in each of AQMD's four counties, where residents will be encouraged to voice their concerns about local air quality issues;
- A "Children's Clean Air Bill of Rights," which will invite children and others to sign petitions calling on all Southern Californians to step up efforts to clean the air;
- Dialogue with residents on strategies for reducing toxic air pollution following the expected release later this year of results from AQMD's Multiple Air Toxics Exposure Study III; and
- Speaking opportunities on AQMD's goal to convert all school buses in the region to compressed natural gas or lower-emission diesel models.



Lawnmower Exchange Program to be Held this Spring

Trade in your old gasoline-powered mower and receive a \$399 non-polluting, cordless rechargeable Neuton electric mower for only \$100 through the AQMD's 3rd annual Lawnmower Exchange program.

Responding to sold out events in 2003 and 2004, the AQMD will hold up to ten lawn mower exchange events within the AQMD's four-county region starting April 2, 2005, in Palm Springs. Unlike the past two seasons, participants will not need to line up and receive a mower on a first-come, first-served basis. This year, participants will pre-register either online or by telephone, picking their site and half-hour time slot.

For details on the lawnmower exchange, go to <http://www.aqmd.gov> or call (888) 425-6247.



This news publication is produced by the South Coast Air Quality Management District's (AQMD) Public Affairs Office. AQMD is the air

pollution control agency for Orange County and major portions of Los Angeles, San Bernardino and Riverside counties.

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