

Public Action Can Help Prevent Ozone This Summer

Despite being declared a clean air attainment region by the Environmental Protection Agency early this year, the Central Oklahoma region must maintain its efforts to preserve its clean air status as summer approaches.

The ACOG Clean Air Committee has already unveiled the first components of its public education program with the annual electric lawnmower promotion with OGE.

Six popular radio stations in the metro are being utilized for the program. Each week, starting last month, and running through the end of June, a new station will promote the benefits of every day clean air habits, and the opportunity to win an electric lawnmower from OG&E Electric Services, Black and Decker and ACOG. The stations include WKY-AM, KATT-FM, KYIS-FM, KQOB-FM, KKWD-FM and WWLS AM/FM. Listeners can register online at www.letscleartheair.org and nominate their favorite radio personality to deliver the winning mower.

An electric lawnmower is a great example of a sensible clean air practice.

Electric lawnmowers are cordless and rechargeable, expending only the energy used in its battery. It outputs no pollution, while a traditional two-cycle gasoline powered mower, operated for one hour, emits as many pollutants as a vehicle driven from Oklahoma City to Houston!

The Clean Air Team is also sponsoring the state duathlon, a running and bicycling event at Lake Draper on July 11. The Oklahoma state championship race combines a three-kilometer run, a 30-kilometer bicycle segment and a three-kilometer run to finish the event. Hosted by the Triathlon Club of Oklahoma City, the event is the premier race of the four-event annual series in the burgeoning "ironman" field. Attended by hundreds of participants and spectators, the event also emphasizes healthy living, and the benefits of running and bicycling. Those wishing to be involved should visit www.triokc.org.

In addition to the lawnmower campaign and the state duathlon, public edu-

cation spots promoting clean air will be on television, radio and billboards this summer, as well as announcements of Clean Air Alert Days for ozone.

Three Impacts of Air Quality

Air quality impacts the region's health, economy and way of life. The increased emphasis on the health of metro citizens is evidenced by the formation of the Central Oklahoma Turning Point health initiative. Central Oklahomans experience high incidences of asthma, allergies and heart disease, and these problems are only exacerbated when ozone, or smog, levels are elevated.

Central Oklahoma's clean air status also has a direct effect on the funding and growth of the transportation system and the area's ability to expand area industries and attract new jobs.

Additionally, the Central Oklahoma region has enrolled in EPA's Early Action Compact program. The compact show-
...See "Clean Air" on page four.



Inside Perspective:

Regional Mosquito Plan Being Implemented	2
Tree Enhancement Program Accepting Applications	2
New Wayfinding System Being Installed in Metro	3
What's New Around the Region	3
ACOG Calendar	4

Incident Workshop Held at ACOG

Approximately 30 professionals from the Oklahoma City metro area attended a recent Traffic Incident Management workshop at ACOG. Funded through a special FHWA Intelligent Transportation Systems grant, the metropolitan planning organization hosted engineers, transportation planners, fire fighters, police officers, emergency medical service providers, public safety personnel, and wrecker crews representing 11 different agencies or organizations to learn about responding to roadway emergencies.

The day long course involved discus-

sions regarding: tools to promote quick clearance of the roadway following an accident, providing for safety at the incident site, informing motorists in advance of incident-related roadway congestion, and developing a unified incident command structure. The group also worked in teams to analyze a fictitious incident on a freeway ramp.

Instructors for the National Highway Institute course were John O'Laughlin and Ted Smith, both currently employed by PB Farradyne. O'Laughlin has previous
...See "Incident" on page four.

Regional Mosquito Plan Being Implemented

ACOG and the Oklahoma City County Health Department (OCCHD) are implementing a regional mosquito control program that is designed to prevent the spread of West Nile Virus (WNV) and other mosquito-borne illnesses. This is the third year that WNV will be present in the region, and the second year that OCCHD will provide mosquito control products to communities in Oklahoma County.

Last year, there were 79 human cases of WNV, including 56 cases that were neuro-invasive, which are the most severe, and require intensive hospitalization.

This year, OCCHD is providing mosquito control pesticide to eligible communities for free. There will be no match or administrative contracts required this year.

Distribution plans are still being developed, but it appears that it will be handled on a prorated scale, based on population and/or probability of risk, based on last year's incidence rate. All communities in Oklahoma County are eligible for the program.

Last year in the county, Bethany, Choctaw, Del City, Edmond, Harrah, Jones City, Midwest City, Nichols Hills, Nicoma Park, Oklahoma City, Spencer, The Village and Warr Acres participated in the prevention program.

Funding for the program comes from the Centers for Disease Control and the Oklahoma Department of Health to develop public education and to assist communities in Oklahoma County with mosquito abatement and control pro-

grams. OCCHD has asked ACOG to assist with administering and promoting the grant.

The state health department, through its county branches, is also testing birds for the virus. Dead birds of the raptor species, such as crows and bluejays, can be tested for the virus in Canadian, Cleveland, Logan and Oklahoma counties. Residents are encouraged to call their local health department to check if their



local facility accepts birds for testing. Data culled from these specimens is vital in tracking mosquito-borne diseases in the region.

For more information, contact Jerry Church, ACOG at 234-2264, or e-mail at jchurch@acogok.org.

Central Oklahoma *Perspective*

Offering Regional Leaders News and Information

21 East Main, Suite 100
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73104-2405
(405) 234-2264/FAX: (405) 234-2200
TDD: (405) 234-2217/www.acogok.org
E-mail address: acog@acogok.org

Association of Central Oklahoma Governments

*"Providing Regional Leadership in
Central Oklahoma Since 1966"*

Established in 1966, the Association of Central Oklahoma Governments (ACOG) is a voluntary association of cities, towns and counties. ACOG helps member governments plan for common needs, cooperate for mutual benefit and coordinate for sound regional development.

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Executive Director:

Zach Taylor

Editor: Jerry Church

Layout: Ken Brown

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Tree Grant, Enhancement Program Now Accepting Applications

The Oklahoma Department of Transportation (ODOT) has announced the application cycle and requirements for the 2004 Highway Tree Grant Program. This competitive program awards communities with funding to plant trees and shrubs for the beautification of interstate highways or primary state highways leading into or through their cities.

Approximately \$400,000 in federal enhancement funds are expected to be available for selected projects, but funding is contingent upon the reauthorization of the federal intermodal transportation act. Therefore, the 2004 Highway Tree Grant Program may be delayed until 2005; if so, submitted grant applications will be considered once the program is funded. The maximum award available per selected project is \$25,000. Proposals require a 25 percent local match.

For additional information, please contact the ODOT Beautification Office at (405) 521-4037 or beauty@odot.org.

ODOT also recently announced the application cycle and eligibility criteria for applying for the FFY 2005 and FFY

2006 Oklahoma Transportation Enhancement funds. This competitive program provides an 80-percent federal match for projects demonstrating a relationship to the intermodal transportation system. Examples of eligible projects include pedestrian and bicycle facility construction, highway landscaping, rehabilitation of historic transportation structures, and scenic or historical highway enhancement.

Applications for this program must be submitted for preliminary review by Oct. 1, 2004 and for final review by January 3, 2005. In spring 2005, the Transportation Enhancement Advisory Committee (TEAC) will evaluate each application and forward its recommendations to the Oklahoma Transportation Commission for final selection. Availability of funding is also contingent upon the reauthorization of the federal intermodal transportation act.

Application packets are available at ODOT's Web site. For any additional questions or comments, please contact the Special Projects Branch at 521-2454.

New Wayfinding System in Metro

The city of Oklahoma City is beginning to install its new wayfinding signage system. The signage system was intended to assist first-time visitors and those who may not be familiar with the downtown region. The system will provide more consistent, clear and attractive signage, and help make the downtown area friendlier and more accessible.

Funded through the city's General Obligation Bond Issue 2000 election, the system will feature standing and hanging gold and blue signs with ornate art deco styled framing on white poles. The system will be comprised of 98 signs, including 45 motorist signs, 22 pedestrian signs and 27 information kiosks.

Among the destinations that the signs will point to include the Oklahoma City National Memorial, Bricktown, the Arts District, the Oklahoma City Museum of Art, Stage Center and the Civic Center.

Oklahoma City Manager Jim Couch said that the system will replace the 'hodgepodge' of dissimilar signs and create a unified system that will not only be functional but attractive.

Jeffrey Corbin Design and Cobb Engineering performed the system design and engineering. The signs were manufactured and will be installed by J & B Graphics.

In addition to the sign system, a new parking Web site, at www.parkingokc.com showcases parking lots and locations in the downtown area.



Signage will help people find their way.



Around the Region

- The **Oklahoma SAFE KIDS Coalition** is taking registrations for its annual "Tee Up for SAFE KIDS" fundraising golf tournament, scheduled for July 12 at **Oak Tree Golf and Country Club**. For seven years, the tournament has become a prominent fundraiser for the group, which works to prevent child injuries and fatal accidents. This year's event also includes the popular **Golf Ball Drop**, where participants can buy a golf ball that will be dropped from a helicopter over the first hole. The ball that enters the hole wins \$2,500! To register for the tournament, call 271-5695. Golf ball drop chances can be purchased from Jane Sutter, ACOG.
- **Edmond Fire Chief Gil Harryman** received the **Oklahoma Fire Chiefs Association's** (OCFA) Chief Officer Leadership Award for 2004. Harryman received the award in April from **Mayor Sandra Naifeh**, and **Steve Dow**, the First Vice President of the OCFA. The award recognizes actions and activities of chief officers in Oklahoma that produce progressive improvements in safety, efficiency and effectiveness in the areas of fire prevention, fire suppression and fire administration that are outstanding in nature or impact.
- **Governor Brad Henry** signed into law a child passenger safety measure that is designed to protect all Oklahoma children under six. The new law, which went into effect on April 1, supplants the previous law, which only protected children under age four, and weighing less than 60 lbs. The bill, known as the "booster seat bill," or **S.B. 1224**, stemmed from a comprehensive national report three years ago that listed the state of Oklahoma as having one of the least protective child passenger safety laws. Child

advocates endorsed the bill, with the intent of saving the lives of children.

- The **National League of Cities** has announced June 11 as "**National Small Cities and Towns Day**." The fourth annual celebration was established to recognize the accomplishments of the nation's small communities, draw attention to the essential roles that small communities play, and focus on the financial and budgetary needs during challenging times. Of the nearly 20,000 municipal governments in America, 94 percent have populations less than 25,000 and 87 percent have populations less than 10,000. Small municipalities across the country are asked to participate by promoting their communities. For more information, visit www.nlc.org.
- **Metro Transit** is scheduled to open the new **Downtown Transit Center** in August. The long-awaited facility, located at N.W. 4th and Hudson, will feature wide bays for incoming and outgoing buses and a customer service center that is secure and comfortable. Artist **Don Mitchell** was selected to create six panels of art that will also serve as windscreens for the center. The art project, which was partnered with the **Oklahoma City Arts Commission**, will feature colorful metal sculptures and "story" scenes on each panel.



Downtown Transit Center under construction

“Clean Air”

...Continued from page one. cases air-friendly commitments by communities, governments and corporate stakeholders. Clean-burning alternative fueled vehicles are also increasing in use, as more government and private fleet operators realize the value of clean air and the efficiency of alternative fuels. As gasoline prices remain high, alternative fuels are an effective way of combating the surge in prices. Contact ACOG's Clean Cities program for more information.

The EPA's clean air announcement comes at a time when Central Oklahoma is facing exciting growth and future development. As such, it is important to remain diligent.

Air pollution moves like the wind, and a long summer of untenable weather, coupled with apathy, could put the region back in an uncomfortable situation.

“Incident”

...Continued from page one. experience as a firefighter and state trooper in Washington; and Smith served as an emergency traffic patrol manager. Course evaluation comments ranked instructors as well versed in the subject. Attendees commented that the seminar helped them understand the need to work

with other agencies, identified components of local incident management policies that could be reviewed and improved, and provided good examples of how several jurisdictions/institutions can work together.

Representatives from Edmond, Midwest City, Norman, Oklahoma City, Okla-

homa County, the Oklahoma (Turnpike) Transportation Authority, Oklahoma Department of Transportation, Oklahoma Department of Public Safety, Oklahoma Wreckers Association, Norman EMSSTAT, OKC Area Emergency Medical Services Authority, and Federal Highway Administration attended the workshop.

ACOG Calendar

June

- 4th ACOG Orientation, 8:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.
- 8th 9-1-1 Technical Committee, 9:30 a.m.
- 10th Intermodal Transportation Technical Committee, 10 a.m.
- 24th 9-1-1 Board of Directors, 1 p.m.
Intermodal Transportation Policy Committee, 1:20 p.m.
ACOG Board of Directors, 1:45 p.m.
Garber-Wellington Policy Committee, 2:30 p.m.

July

- 5th ACOG Offices Closed for Independence Day
- 8th Areawide Planning and Technical Advisory Committee, 9 a.m.
Intermodal Transportation Technical Committee, 10 a.m.
- 9th Garber-Wellington Technical Committee, 10 a.m.
- 20th Operation FireSAFE, 10 a.m.
Clean Cities Stakeholders, 1 p.m.

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Association of Central Oklahoma Governments

21 East Main • Suite 100
Oklahoma City, OK 73104-2405
(405) 234-2264 • FAX 234-2200
TDD 234-2217 • www.acogok.org

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