

## Regional Air Pollution Prevention Being Planned

Despite moderate and cool spring weather, ozone levels began to rise slowly in May, indicating that air pollution in the region should be taken into consideration. Since 1992, with the emergence of the Clean Air Alert Day program, the Central Oklahoma region has implemented a voluntary air pollution prevention program that has helped the metro remain in full compliance of all federal air quality policies.

Over 90 percent of Alert Days called in the past decade have occurred between July 1 and mid-September. Occasional high-pressure systems that linger over the Southern Plains sometimes intensify the situation and create multiple and consecutive Alert Days.

Recognition of air pollution issues in the state and region is fairly high. An annual survey conducted by ACOG over the past three years, indicates that over 70 percent of people recognize Clean Air Alert Days and take some form of action.

Among the more popular discretionary prevention activity includes:

- Over 54 percent of people surveyed, filled their vehicles with gas during the evening. Ozone is formed partially

by sunlight, so by taking sunlight out of the equation, there is less of a chance to create pollution.

- When asked if they postponed mowing the lawn, 57.6 percent of people surveyed said "yes."
- When asked if they avoided outdoor grilling with lighter fluid, 48.7 percent said yes.
- Over 43 percent of respondents said that they quit "topping" off the tank. Topping off the tank is a bad habit that people get into when they try to squeeze in the last few drops of gasoline to round out to the nearest dollar. It usually results in spillage and smelly shoes!
- When asked if they utilized public transportation, 13 percent of respondents said that they did.

Since the implementation of Metro-Transit's free bus rides on Alert Days, ridership generally goes up when compared to non-Alert Days. Throughout five years of ridership data, there is a general rise in ridership on Alert Days. Ridership increases on Alert Days is a positive ...See "Clean Air" on page four.



'Lil Joe,' ACOG's Clean Air buffalo, will re-emerge this summer in and around Bricktown.

## REAP Funds Awarded to Central Oklahoma Communities

Several small and rural communities in the Central Oklahoma region were recently awarded funding by the ACOG Board of Directors for transportation and economic development projects through the state's Rural Economic Action Program (REAP).

Under REAP guidelines; the maximum dollar amount awarded is \$50,000 for grants to be used for a variety of projects in the areas of community economic development and transportation. Communities in the Central Oklahoma region with a population of fewer than 7,000 were eligible to apply. Criteria for judging is based on a point system, with a value given to each section of the REAP application.

As has been the case in recent years, there were far more applications and funding requests than the grant could satisfy. For example, 30 applications totaling over \$1,244,380 were received for consideration of approximately \$441,750 in REAP funding available in the transportation category. There were also 30 grant applications totaling over \$978,378 received for consideration of the approximate \$294,500 available in the REAP economic/community development category.

After applications were reviewed and ranked, the ACOG Board of Directors approved at its April meeting the recommended projects in both categories at ...See "REAP Grants" on page three.

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# Stormwater Conference Planned for Metro

With the Environmental Protection Agency's Stormwater Phase 2 policies now in effect, the time is ripe for relevant training for all stormwater managers in the region. The seventh annual Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System Storm Water Conference will be held at the Marriott Hotel Conference Center in Oklahoma City on June 13-17.

The Oklahoma Municipal League, the City of Oklahoma City, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the states in EPA Region 6 (Oklahoma, Texas, Louisiana, New Mexico and Arkansas), sponsors the weeklong conference. Stormwater managers, regulatory officials, environmental professionals and personnel administering Phase I and Phase II rules should consider attending.

Since 1999, the conference has been held in Region 6. These conferences bring together representatives from municipalities, federal facilities, states, and EPA to learn about new regulatory developments and share ideas and experiences in developing and implementing stormwater management programs to help protect our water resources.

Primary topics covered at the conference include

- Stormwater 101 for beginners
- Updates on Phase 1 and Phase 2 Stormwater programming
- Tools for running a municipal stormwater program
- Working with non-traditional MS4s
- Construction and post-construction programs
- Stormwater best management practices
- Program compliance assurance
- Field sampling



- Construction controls, and more.

The first session to kick off the conference is a primer for those new to stormwater regulations. Gary Shockley, Storm Water Quality Environmental Manager for the City of Oklahoma City, is presenting "Stormwater 101" to showcase

the basic rationales and importance of good stormwater programming. "If you have environmental responsibilities for your community and are interested in protecting your community's viability for

the future, this will be a unique opportunity to learn what help is available and what can work for you," Shockley said.

The Marriott Hotel Conference Center is located at 3233 Northwest Expressway. The registration fee is \$200. To register, call OML at 528-7515. For specific information on the conference, contact Terry Branch at (214) 665-6667 or Gary Shockley (405) 297-1774.

## Central Oklahoma *Perspective*

Offering Regional Leaders News and Information

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### 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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## Trees, Forestry Grants Available

The Oklahoma Department of Transportation (ODOT) has announced the application cycle and requirements for the 2005 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 the cities. Since the program's inception in 1997, over 130 communities across the state have received grants for highway landscaping projects.

Entities eligible to apply include local and state governments, public schools and universities and Indian Nations and tribal governments. Funding should be spent on buying and/or planting trees, and/or the installation of drip irrigation systems.

Approximately \$250,000 in federal enhancement funds is expected to be available for selected projects this year. The maximum award available per selected project is \$25,000. Proposals require a 25 percent local match, while the

grant will fund 75 percent of the remaining.

The deadline to submit grant application is July 14. Application packets are available through ACOG, or from the ODOT Beautification Office at (405) 521-4037 or [beauty@odot.org](mailto:beauty@odot.org).

In related grant news, the Oklahoma Department of Agriculture, Food and Forestry is still taking applications for the Oklahoma Urban and Community Forestry Grant Program. The program is a partnership with the U.S. Forest Service and the Oklahoma Urban and Community Forestry Council.

The urban forest grants are a 50/50 match grant. Eligible applicants include state entities, local governments, approved non-profit organizations, neighborhood associations, civic groups, educational institutions and other tree-related groups.

The intent of the **Urban and Community Forestry Assistance Program** is to enable local communities to effectively manage and improve their community

## “REAP Grants”

...Continued from page one.  
the 100 percent level. The selection of 2005 REAP Projects approved in the **Transportation** category include:

- Town of Mulhall - \$34,990 for street and intersection improvements.
- Town of Cimarron City - \$24,600 for street repairs.
- Town of Luther - \$50,000 for street repairs.
- Town of Cedar Valley - \$50,000 for street repairs.
- Town of Union City - \$42,500 for street repairs.
- City of Harrah - \$50,000 for street repairs.
- Jones City - \$49,250 for installation of school sidewalks.
- Cleveland Co., Dist. 2 - \$41,000 for street repairs.
- Canadian Co., Dist. 3 - \$50,000 for street repairs.
- Logan Co., Dist. 1 - \$35,000 for street repairs.
- Canadian Co., Dist. 1 - \$14,410 remaining transportation funds for street repairs.

The selection of 2005 REAP Projects approved by the ACOG Board in the **Economic/Community Development** category include:

- Town of Slaughterville - \$41,500 to purchase and equip a brush pumper truck.
- City of Crescent - \$25,000 to purchase and equip police vehicles.
- Town of Cimarron City - \$2,200 for engineering for water and sewer systems.
- City of Noble - \$24,500 to build fire and EMS station.
- Town of Coyle - \$50,000 to expand fire station.
- Town of Luther - \$50,000 to replace broken sewer line.
- Town of Calumet - \$25,150 to meet FEMA match to purchase fire engine.
- Jones City - \$50,000 to improve waste water treatment plant capacity.
- Town of Marshall - \$26,150 remaining E/C development funds to replace sewer lines.

REAP projects are subject to legislative budget decisions. For more information, contact Diane McCullough, ACOG.



## Around the Region

- At an awards luncheon last month, the Oklahoma Chapter of the **American Society for Public Administration** named **Mike Fogarty**, Chief Executive Officer of the **Oklahoma Health Care Authority**, the group's 2005 Administrator of the Year. **Dr. Ernest Holloway**, President of **Langston University**, and **Norma Noble**, Deputy Secretary of Commerce for **Workforce Development**, were selected by the organization to receive the Distinguished Public Service Award.

- The **Oklahoma City Fire Department** received a \$56,000 firefighter grant award through the federal **Assistance to Firefighters Grant program**. The one-year grant will allow the department to enhance its abilities to respond to fire and fire-related hazards. The U.S. Fire Administration (USFA) administers the program, which is part of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

- The **Oklahoma SAFE KIDS Coalition** is taking registrations for its annual “Tee Up for SAFE KIDS” fundraising golf tournament, scheduled for July 11 at **Oak Tree Golf and Country Club**. For several years, the tournament has become the 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 or to reserve a golf ball, call 271-5695.

- The **Central Oklahoma Transportation and Parking Authority** is hosting a free public meeting **July 7** to all Central Oklahomans wanting to learn more about the regional **Fixed**

**Guideway Study**, which is currently being conducted. Fixed guideway systems like light rail transit, bus rapid transit, modern streetcars, high occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes for highways, and other transportation solutions are being researched. The Fixed Guideway Study meeting will take place at the McAlpine Center at 428 W. California and will start at 7 p.m. Visit [www.okfgs.org](http://www.okfgs.org) for more information.

- **Jane Sutter**, Intergovernmental Services Division Director for **ACOG**, recently celebrated her 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of service to the Association. She was also honored last month with the 2005 Woman of Achievement award, presented by the **National Association of Women Business Owners of Central Oklahoma**. The award is given to women that show a strong commitment to public service and demonstrate innovative accomplishments that meet critical needs for the community. Leslie Owens, councilmember of Warr Acres, nominated Sutter for the honor.



Jane Sutter and Zach Taylor, ACOG

## “Tree Grants”

...Continued from page two. forests. Components of a successful community forestry program involve much more than tree planting, but include planning, maintenance, protection, education and training, and utilization of the community forest resource. One of the most important aspects of urban and community forestry is maintaining a broad base of citizen support. Promotion of volunteerism and involvement of non-profit organizations will aid in securing citizen support.

Applications can be downloaded from the ODA Web site at [www.oda.state.ok.us](http://www.oda.state.ok.us). The application deadline is June 24, 2005. Contact Mark Bays at the Oklahoma Forestry Services, 522-6158 for more information.

## “Clean Air”

...Continued from page one. indication that the program is having an effect.

A public education committee has been busy implementing a social marketing program for the region. The committee is comprised of a variety of partners including ACOG, the Oklahoma Department of Transportation, Chesapeake Energy, Devon Energy, OGE Energy Corp., the Greater Oklahoma City Chamber, Metro-Transit and ACOG member governments.

### June

- 9th Intermodal Transportation Technical Committee, 10 a.m.
- 14th 9-1-1 Technical Committee, 9:30 a.m.
- 20th Citizen's Advisory Committee, 3 p.m.
- 30th 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

- 8th Garber-Wellington Technical Committee, 10 a.m.
- 14th Intermodal Transportation Technical Committee, 10 a.m.
- 19th Operation FireSAFE

Currently, the public education program is involved with an ongoing electric lawnmower promotion with OGE. The promotion is being held in conjunction with Black and Decker and all seven stations in the Central Oklahoma Citadel Radio group. Traditional, gasoline-powered lawnmowers and lawn equipment (referred to by the Environmental Protection Agency as non-road mobile sources) contribute up to 30 percent of total air pollution. Details on this promotion can be found at [www.letcleartheair.org](http://www.letcleartheair.org).

The committee's buffalo will also come out of winter hibernation this month. Started last year, in conjunction with the

Nature Conservancy, the Spirit of the Buffalo public art project involves over a hundred buffalo in various forms displayed throughout the region. Downtown Oklahoma City Inc. and the Bricktown Association are now administering the program, and the hope is that the buffaloes will emerge every summer through the state's Centennial in 2007.

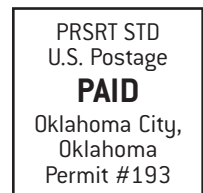
There will be more air quality programming, public education, marketing, promotions and news throughout the summer. Communities and organizations needing information or desiring to join the partnership should contact Jerry Church, ACOG.

## Central Oklahoma *Perspective*

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