

## 2006 Summer Ozone Readings are Red Hot

High ozone readings throughout the metro area so far this summer set Central Oklahoma up for a nail-biting year next season regarding its ability to stay in compliance with federal clean air standards. Higher than normal readings began in early June and several readings throughout the month were in excess of the federal daily threshold.

Ground level ozone, known as smog, is measured at six monitoring sites placed throughout the region. Four excessive readings (exceedances) at any site could place the entire metro in position for a federal declaration of “non-attainment” of clean air standards. To remain in compliance, a site’s fourth highest reading over a three-year period must not exceed 0.08 parts per million. Already this season, the region has registered at least 10 episodes of exceedances, with still two months of ozone season remaining.

There is a safety net for the region. First, the region can’t be declared based on one year of high readings. The Environmental Protection Agency looks at three years of data, so this season’s data will be matched up with 2004 and 2005 and then averaged out. Then, it will lay the groundwork for the next data set of



The Air Quality public education campaign is in place to inform the public about ways to reduce pollution.

2005, 2006 and 2007. Low readings last year help this year’s rolling ozone average, but continued high readings in 2006 could set up an untenable situation next year, and in the future. With this year’s numbers already high, the projected fourth highest reading next year is within reach, and the possibility of exceeding the overall federal standards

is becoming more plausible.

The region did enter into the Early Action Compact, which will help defer a “non-attainment” designation should it occur. Regional leaders are looking at several options to make sure that the Central Oklahoma region remains diligent in handling this issue.

...See “High Ozone” on page four.

## Mid-Decade Census Estimates Show Growth in Region

Mid-decade estimates provided by the U.S. Census Bureau showcase that the Central Oklahoma (ACOG region) is growing. In June, the Bureau and the Oklahoma State Data Center released the 2005 population estimates by county and place. Since 2000, the data indicates that the state of Oklahoma gained population at a rate of 2.82 percent.

In the ACOG region, all counties showed growth in the past five years, including 12.6 percent in Canadian County, 8.8 percent in Logan County, 8.5 percent in McClain County, 8.5 percent in Grady

County, 8.1 percent in Cleveland County and 3.7 percent growth in Oklahoma County.

In the Central Oklahoma region, the estimates indicate a growth rate of over 9,000 people. Piedmont was the fastest growing community with a 28.4 percent increase. Tuttle and Newcastle, which are in the 9-1-1 ACOG area, showed a 24.94 percent increase and 15.61 percent increase respectively. Mustang and Moore also had double digit increases of 20.8 percent and 15.9 percent.

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# New Officers Named to ACOG Boards and Committees

Change is constant. The election process, retirements and changes in people's lives bring alterations in the makeup of the governing boards of the Association of Central Oklahoma Governments.

Officers for the 2007 fiscal year have been named and will lead the Association in coming months as it considers policy issues regarding transportation, air and water quality, census and data activities, federal grants, state and federal legislation, regulations and programs that affect the Central Oklahoma region. Logan County Commissioner Mark Sharpton has been named Chairman of the **ACOG Board of Directors**. Willa Johnson, Oklahoma City Councilmember, serves as Vice-Chair and, Kathy Walker,

Nichols Hills Councilmember, is Secretary-Treasurer.

Sharpton has represented Logan County on the ACOG board since his election to office in 2003. "I find ACOG to be a valuable planning and information center to keep us abreast of development in our region," Sharpton said. "Being involved has allowed us to take advantage of opportunities and information on how to move Logan County forward. I plan to continue to push to make that happen for the entire region."

Commissioner Sharpton said he appreciates the opportunity to serve as board chairman because it gives Logan County visibility and allows him to network with other government officials. "I realize as chairman that I'm there to serve the membership as a whole," he said, "but one of my goals will be to continue to emphasize the needs of rural growth areas and to bring them to the forefront."

**The 9-1-1 Association of Central Oklahoma Governments** has also confirmed new officers. Grant Hedrick, Canadian County Commissioner will serve as Chairman, while David Hopper, Norman Councilmember, serves as Vice-Chair. Dave Howe is now Secretary-Treasurer. The 9-1-1 Association was formed to implement and manage the emergency telephone system for suburban communities within the Central Oklahoma

region. The 9-1-1 Board also named Willa Johnson, former Piedmont Councilmember George Fina and Midwest City Councilmember Charles Joiner to the Operation FireSAFE Foundation board. This group oversees the operations of the region's juvenile firesetting prevention program, which is conducted by over 22 fire departments in Central Oklahoma.

Finally, the **Garber-Wellington Policy Committee** - an entity of the ACOG Board of Directors - nominated officers last month including Chairman John Brown, Piedmont Councilmember; Jim Pumphrey, Councilmember, Nicoma Park as Vice-Chair; and Marsha Jefferson, Mayor of Spencer, to Secretary-Treasurer. The Garber-Wellington Policy Committee works on issues relating to Central Oklahoma's ground water and surface water activities.

Aside from the newly commissioned officers, spring elections across the region have led to new members joining the ACOG board. Several public officials and staff spent a day in Bricktown learning about public service and ACOG's programming and services. Mike Fina, Piedmont Councilmember; Greg Tirey, Nicoma Park Councilmember and Ken Bartlett, Del City Councilmember attended orientation. Joe Khatib from Oklahoma Department of Transportation also attended.

## 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.

#### Chairman:

Commissioner Mark Sharpton, *Logan County*

#### Vice Chairman:

Councilmember Willa Johnson, *Oklahoma City*

#### Secretary-Treasurer:

Councilmember Kathy Walker, *Nichols Hills*

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# ACOG Staff Talk with Visiting Iraqi Team

A group of leaders and administrators from Iraq recently visited ACOG and the Central Oklahoma region in June to learn more about government programming, regional development and public administration here in the United States.

This is the fourth time in the past few years that ACOG has participated in such a visit.

The U.S. Department of State and the Oklahoma City International Visitors Council sponsored the visit. While in Central Oklahoma, the team visited with Jim Couch and the city manager's office of the City of Oklahoma City, the Oklahoma City Chamber, members of the Sac and Fox Nation and numerous appointed and elected state officials. The team left Central Oklahoma and visited Phoenix, Ariz., as well.

Reaction from both ACOG staff and the team was positive, and the interaction was informative and involved much serious dialogue. On their ACOG visit, the team of officials and translators were briefed on models of regional government and learned about transportation planning, councils of government, regional coalition building, 9-1-1 emergency management and water resource and environmental program development. The team was highly interested in modeling their provisional government with the regional council of government (COG) model.

The makeup of the Iraqi team consisted of high-ranking officials in national security, civil affairs, provincial government, research and design and policy development.



A team of Iraqi leaders and administrators recently visited ACOG and Central Oklahoma to learn more about government administration.



## Around the Region

- The **Main Street** program of **El Reno** was honored with the **Great American Main Street Award** this summer. The National Trust for Historic Preservation honors communities for revitalizing and preserving downtown and main street areas. The trust only honors five communities every year. El Reno has had a successful Main Street program since 1988.

- **Michell Dallal, Kelly Dunkerley and Glenda Vassar** of **State Farm Insurance** presented checks of \$2,500 each to the **Operation FireSAFE** and **Risk Watch** programs. Funding will be used for training and the purchase of curriculum materials. Operation FireSAFE is the regional juvenile firesetting prevention program, and Risk Watch is a safety program that is designed to be taught in schools, for a variety of student age groups.

- Oklahoma Governor **Brad Henry** signed **Oklahoma's Bicycle Law** (HB2926), turning the bill into law. It is now a finable offense to pass a bike closer than three feet in Oklahoma. The bill passed an almost unanimous Oklahoma House vote—43 to one—on April 26. The new law re-defines bicycle for the purposes of the state's vehicle code, eliminating restricting wheel sizes and configurations. It also eliminates confusing language as to where bicyclists should ride on the road and removes the previous state requirement that cyclists ride on sidewalks. The bill also sets up fines for injury or death if a motorist hits a cyclist. Oklahoma is the third state to sign into law a comprehensive bicycle bill.

- **CNNMoney.com** has rated two cities in Central Oklahoma on its annual "Best Places to Live: Great American Towns" list in July. **Norman** was the

highest-rated Oklahoma town, coming in at No. 40 while **Edmond** ranked No. 52. The only other community in the state named to the list was Broken Arrow. Criteria for the list were based on several factors such as housing, education, quality of life, leisure activities and more. For a complete list of the Top 100 Cities, visit [www.cnnmoney.com](http://www.cnnmoney.com).

- State Rep. **Bill Case** has been honored by the **County Government Legislative Council** for his constant support of county government measures during the 2006 legislative session and was represented the "**Legislator of the Year**" award last month.

- **Brad Nesom** has joined the **ACOG** staff as Senior 9-1-1 GIS Data Specialist for the 9-1-1 program. Nesom has a wealth of GIS knowledge and previously worked for the city of Ponca City and the Oklahoma Water Resources Board. He will assist with the ongoing build-out of the regional wireless 9-1-1 system, which will incorporate a vast amount of GIS data and technology. Nesom and his wife Kristi are the parents of four children and are currently moving to the Central Oklahoma region.



Brad Nesom, 9-1-1 ACOG GIS specialist.

## “High Ozone”

...Continued from page one.

Private and public entities are being briefed throughout the season to address ways to curb the potential for ozone formation. The public can perform an enormous role in helping to alleviate the situation, as well.

ACOG’s public education program is currently being implemented, and will run through the end of September. A television public service announcement, and four new radio spots have been produced and are currently running on local outlets. Four new billboards are also up around the region.

For more information on air quality in Central Oklahoma, visit [www.letsclartheair.org](http://www.letsclartheair.org).

## “Census”

...Continued from page one.

Choctaw had a growth rate of 12.29 percent.

ACOG communities with an estimated population reduction were generally less than five percent or were statistically insignificant. Since these are estimates, there is still five more years before the

<b>ACOG Calendar</b>	
<b>August</b>	
8th	Clean Cities Stakeholders, 1:30 p.m.
10th	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.
<b>September</b>	
4th	ACOG Offices Closed for Labor Day
8th	Garber-Wellington Technical Committee, 10 a.m.
12th	9-1-1 Technical Committee, 9:30 a.m.
14th	Areawide Planning Technical Advisory Committee, 9 a.m. Intermodal Transportation Technical Committee, 10 a.m.
19th	Operation FireSAFE, 10 a.m.
28th	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.

next decennial Census counts in 2010. Growth in unincorporated parts of ACOG member counties, and in rural and sub-urban areas did show greater percentage growth than the urban cities in the state.

Overall, out of 595 communities in the state, 339 had shown growth or no change in population. Call John Sharp, ACOG, for a complete list of 2005 estimates.

Central Oklahoma

# Perspective

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