

## Fiscal Highlights

### **Division of Air Quality: New Appropriations Update** - Angela J. Oh

Air quality was a priority during the 2014 General Session. Lawmakers passed legislation to cut emissions, encourage energy efficiency, support clean vehicles and fuels, and reduce wood smoke in areas that are exceeding health standards for air pollution. Funding provided by one-time and ongoing appropriations will boost air quality research and agency staffing, increase public awareness of clean air issues, retrofit heavy-duty diesel engines, swap out high-polluting small engines, and convert wood-burning fireplaces to natural gas in homes where wood is the sole source of heat.

The Department of Environmental Quality's Division of Air Quality (DAQ) received a \$500,400 ongoing appropriation for an air quality public awareness campaign in partnership with existing clean air programs such as UCAIR and TravelWise. The Legislature appropriated \$500,000 one-time to DAQ to help convert homes that burn wood as their sole source of heat and \$250,000 one-time was appropriated to educate the public on the hazards of wood smoke. The Clean Air Retrofit, Replacement, and Off-road Technology (CARROT) program received \$200,000 one-time for grants and loans to small businesses and individuals seeking to reduce the emissions from their heavy-duty diesel or small-engine equipment.

In addition to the items above, legislators appropriated \$1.4 million one-time to DAQ that allocated \$1 million for Utah-specific air quality research. The remaining \$400,000 is for improved emissions inventory, photochemical modeling, and equipment (including a volatile organic compound infrared testing camera) for use in the Uintah Basin. DAQ also received \$400,000 in ongoing funding for four full-time employees to work on Uintah Basin oil and gas permitting and compliance.

In preparation for the new research funding, available after July 1st, DAQ began a stakeholder-driven process in April to identify and prioritize potential projects. Six research areas were determined to be most critical in order to address Utah's unique air pollution sources, meteorology, and topography to provide a firm scientific basis for future air quality planning. The main research areas include:

- Improved Emissions Inventories for Precursors to Ozone and PM2.5 Formation
- Air Quality Computer Modeling Improvement
- Long Range Transport of Dust and Smoke from Wildfires
- Continuous Improvement in Compliance with DAQ State Implementation Plan (SIP) Control Strategies
- Ambient Air Monitoring Network Improvement
- Engineering Review of Reasonable Available Control Technology/Best Available Control Technology (RACT/BACT) for Industrial Sources

DAQ has set the following schedule to ensure that projects can be completed in the time frame of 6 to 18 months after the funding is available:

- April 23: Public solicitation of areas of research needs
- May 7: Air Quality Board informational item
- May 9: University research representatives validate project areas needed
- May 23: Close of solicitation of proposed areas of research

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- May 30: DAQ selects proposed areas of research
  - June 2: DAQ solicits full research proposals from selected researchers
  - June 27: Full research proposals due
  - July 11: DAQ selects research proposals and awards funding

As of May 20, 2014, there were 36 proposals submitted for consideration in the scoping process with a total cost over \$3.5 million.

One of the criteria identified to select projects was the leveraging of other research funding. It is likely that the total value of the new research selected will exceed the available one-time money through the application of in-kind and other funding sources.

Air quality concerns will continue to be an area of focus. The appropriations related to air quality during the 2014 General Session addressed some significant needs and aims to ensure that the state is in a better position to improve air quality.