

Issue Brief – Air Quality Planning

TEQNG IB-1

SUMMARY

The Air Quality Program is responsible for the development and maintenance of the State Implementation Plans (SIP) for the control of carbon monoxide, ozone, sulfur oxides, and particulate matter. This involves the analysis of monitoring data collected by the monitoring section to determine compliance with the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) and the determination of the sources of any violations of the standards.

The Analyst recommends that the Transportation, Environmental Quality, and National Guard Appropriations Subcommittee consider funding \$2,210,000 from the General Fund for air quality planning for FY 2009.

DISCUSSION

The Division of Air Quality is required to collect and review vehicle emission inventories, conduct mobile emissions computer modeling, and perform the air quality functions for all areas of the state. Recently the areas outside the Wasatch Front, including the developing Metropolitan Planning Organizations in Washington and Cache Counties are requiring additional attention to maintain acceptable air quality standards. Vehicle (mobile source) emissions are Utah's largest source of air pollution. The Division of Air Quality and the stakeholders of Utah have assisted in avoiding violations to air quality standards imposed by the National Ambient Air Quality Standards for the last 15 years.

Utah sent notice to the Environmental Protection Agency office in Denver in December 2007 notifying them that parts of the Wasatch Front were in non-attainment with the new PM 2.5 standard. This included all of Salt Lake and Davis Counties, and parts of Utah, Weber and Cache counties. This requires that DAQ develop a strategy to address the PM 2.5 problem.

Looming early next year is EPA's desire to promulgate a new standard for ozone. Depending on what the new standard is, the state may again be in non-attainment for this standard. Prior to 2007, Utah was in attainment for all National Air Quality Ambient Standards.

The Department has further seen a reduction of \$1,200,000 of Federal Funds during the past year.

To maintain the ability to provide comprehensive Utah based air quality related solutions in the state, the Department of Environmental Quality has requested \$2,210,000 of ongoing General Funds to ensure that responsibilities related to planning, monitoring and developing and implementing control strategies to reduce pollution can be carried out in a timely manner. Additionally new funding will also cover air monitoring equipment replacement needs, and strengthen the ability of the DAQ to respond to the increasing number of requests by rural areas of the state to study ambient air quality statewide.

LEGISLATIVE ACTION

The Division of Air Quality (DAQ) received one-time General Funds of \$1,000,000 and \$500,000 of General Fund Restricted – Environmental Quality Account one-time for FY08 to begin addressing air quality planning and monitoring.

The Analyst recommends that the Transportation, Environmental Quality, and National Guard Appropriations Subcommittee consider funding \$2,210,000 from the General Fund for air quality planning for FY 2009.