

Date: May 26, 2010

To: Environmental Quality Commission

From: Dick Pedersen, Director

Subject: Agenda item F, Informational item: Lakeview fine particulate matter – potential nonattainment
June 16-17, 2010 EQC meeting

Purpose of item DEQ will inform the Environmental Quality Commission about the potential of Lakeview becoming a PM_{2.5} nonattainment area. Recent monitoring indicates Lakeview currently violates the new daily PM_{2.5} standard. Once EPA designates Lakeview as a nonattainment area, DEQ must develop a PM_{2.5} attainment plan to bring the area back into compliance.

Background **What are the federal standards for PM_{2.5}?**

In September 2006, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency strengthened the daily PM_{2.5}, or fine particulate, standard by lowering the level from 65 µg/m³ to 35 µg/m³ and retained the annual PM_{2.5} standard of 15 µg/m³.

Fine particulate matter is a mixture of extremely small particles and droplets in the air and is known to cause or contribute to respiratory disease, asthma attacks, heart problems and premature death. Areas in violation of the PM_{2.5} standard, based on the most recent three years of federal reference monitoring data, are designated as a “nonattainment area” by the EPA. Two communities, Klamath Falls and Oakridge, have been formally designated as nonattainment for the daily PM_{2.5} standard. Lakeview’s recent monitoring data puts the community in violation with the PM_{2.5} standard but it has not been designated nonattainment by EPA. There are up to a dozen communities in Oregon that have elevated levels of fine particulate but do not currently violate the federal standard.

Lakeview’s air quality history

This is not the first time Lakeview has struggled to meet air quality standards. In 1991, Lakeview violated the federal particulate matter, then PM₁₀, standard. DEQ developed a PM₁₀ plan with specific strategies to reduce pollution. The area was able to meet the standards. In fact, the PM₁₀ strategies were so successful in maintaining clean air that Lakeview met the EPA’s initial PM_{2.5} standard when it was adopted in 1997.

Now that Lakeview is violating the PM_{2.5} standard, DEQ will work with the community to bring it back into compliance. As with the earlier PM₁₀ standard,

violations of the PM_{2.5} standard occur during the winter months and largely caused by home wood heating smoke.

Key issues

Process for designating Lakeview as a nonattainment area

When EPA revises a federal health standard, it is required to review and designate any areas that are not in compliance with the standard. In 2007, EPA and the states were identifying and designating PM_{2.5} nonattainment areas and Lakeview did not have three years of federal reference monitoring data. It was not until the end of 2009 that DEQ was able to determine that Lakeview is in violation of the PM_{2.5} standard.

DEQ will submit the data to EPA for certification this year and it is up to EPA to propose Lakeview be designated as a nonattainment area. Regardless of when EPA designates Lakeview as a nonattainment area, DEQ will conduct an evaluation of all PM_{2.5} emission sources in the community in order to identify appropriate strategies to restore and maintain healthy air quality. DEQ and Lakeview will need to develop a plan that will bring air quality into compliance with the standard as soon as possible, and submit the plan to EPA three years after EPA officially designates Lakeview as a nonattainment area.

Next steps

DEQ has been, and will continue to, work with Lakeview to identify strategies and begin development of an attainment plan to bring the area back into compliance with the standard. In addition, DEQ recently acquired \$2 million in federal stimulus funds to implement a woodstove change-out program in Oregon. Lakeview is one of the communities that will receive some of these stimulus funds to help address emissions from wood smoke.

EQC involvement

EQC may be asked to adopt a Lakeview attainment plan as part of Oregon's Clean Air Act implementation plan.

Attachments

None

Approved:

Section: _____

Division: _____

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