



**OZONE  
TRANSPORT  
COMMISSION**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
Wednesday, March 13, 2008

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**EPA's New Ozone Standard Falls Short in Protecting the Public Health, Says  
Ozone Transport Commission**

The Ozone Transport Commission (OTC) today expressed its disappointment that the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) did not follow the science in setting a new ozone standard. Today EPA lowered the primary ozone standard to 0.075 parts per million (ppm), and set the secondary standard at a form and level identical to the primary standard, leaving significant public health benefits and environmental welfare behind.

Setting the ozone standard at 0.075 ppm moves in the right direction, but does not go as far as the Agency's own Clean Air Science Advisory Committee (CASAC) recommended. The CASAC unanimously recommended that EPA revise the health-based ozone standard to within a range of 0.060 – 0.070 ppm, and also recommended that EPA set the secondary standard to protect vegetation over the growing season.

"This standard does not go far enough to protect the public from the harm caused by ozone," said OTC Chair, New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection Commissioner Lisa P. Jackson. "If the EPA had followed the advice of its own experts and established a more protective threshold, an additional 16 million people living in the Northeast would enjoy cleaner, healthier air."

"Once again, EPA is subordinating public health to political expediency," said Jared Snyder, Vice Chair of OTC and Assistant Commissioner of the New York Department of Environmental Conservation. "The public deserves better."

Also in reaction to discussions that took place during EPA's press conference, OTC committed to vigorously resisting EPA's attempt to weaken the Clean Air Act.

Recent work presented at the OTC's November 2007 meeting in Arlington, Virginia demonstrated the potential health benefits of a 0.070 ppm ozone standard. These benefits are the result of reduced emergency room visits due to asthma incidences, fewer hospital admissions for respiratory problems, less school absences and greater worker productivity, and lowered mortality. According to the modeling, a 0.070 ppm ozone standard could provide benefits ranging from approximately \$300 million to \$1.4 billion in the Ozone Transport Region (OTR) alone, and represent almost a 50 percent increase in benefits as compared to a 0.075 ppm ozone standard.

These figures do not include the considerable benefits that would also accrue to citizens in states outside the OTR, nor do they include benefits to the environment from reduced crop and forest loss.

"Despite the urging of a group of Northeast and Mid-Atlantic governors, EPA has decided to issue a less protective standard," said Anna Garcia, OTC's Executive Director. "It is frustrating to know that peoples' health will suffer as a result."

Connecticut

Delaware

District of Columbia

Maine

Maryland

Massachusetts

New Hampshire

New Jersey

New York

Pennsylvania

Rhode Island

Vermont

Virginia

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The Ozone Transport Commission was established under the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990 to address the transport of ground-level ozone and its precursors, oxides of nitrogen (NOx) and volatile organic compounds (VOCs), into and through the region. NOx and VOCs are generated by power plants, cars and trucks, and other industrial business sources.

OTC member jurisdictions are: Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont and Virginia.