

DATE: May 24, 2012

RE: Early research data supports pioneering District fine-particulate strategy

Early data from a major research project could form the basis for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency adopting a new approach to setting particulate matter standards already being pursued by the Valley Air District.

In a story in *Inside EPA's Clean Air Report* dated April 26, a member of EPA's Clean Air Scientific Advisory Committee PM review panel said that early data from a major new study "supports the plausibility that fine particles are affecting human health" and points to adopting a "risk-based" approach to regulation, instead of the "mass-based" approach currently set by EPA.

A mass-based approach aims to reduce overall levels of PM without distinguishing differences in emissions from various sources. A risk-based approach, which is being pursued by the Air District in developing its new fine-particulate (PM_{2.5}) plan, recognizes that certain types of fine-particulate matter are more dangerous to health than others.

According to the new national study, PM_{2.5} from sources such as traffic and coal combustion is the biggest risk to public health.

The Air District held a technical modeling symposium with the state Air Resources Board in April to explore this new approach. In the Valley, motor vehicles account for most of our air pollution.

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