

# CLEAN AIR QUARTERLY

Spring 1999

**T**ransportation Policy Council Chairman Robert Eckels (Judge, Harris County), Houston Mayor Lee Brown, and top business and environmental leaders in the Houston area participated in a news conference on January 26, 1999 to endorse nine principles that address regional air quality. *The Principles for Cleaner Air* will provide a framework that will be used to develop a regional consensus on air pollution reduction measures. These measures will form the basis of a state air quality plan designed to meet federal clean air standards in the Houston-Galveston nonattainment area. The development and enforcement of the State Implementation Plan (SIP) for air quality is the responsibility of the Texas Natural Resource Conservation Commission (TNRCC). TNRCC will submit the SIP to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for approval in November 2000.

Under the 1990 Clean Air Act, Harris and the surrounding

## Local Leaders Endorse Cleaner Air Principles



Photo: Courtesy of H-GAC

From left to right: Jim Kollaer, Greater Houston Partnership President and CEO; George Smith, Regional Air Quality Planning Committee Chairman; Houston Mayor Lee Brown; Harris County Judge Robert Eckels; David Crossley, Citizens' Environmental Coalition President; and Commissioner H. Frank Simpson, H-GAC President, following the news conference in Houston.

### Principles for Cleaner Air

- **Contributions to ozone nonattainment come from every segment of the region.** Consequently, every person, government entity and all businesses of the region, including mobile sources, off road construction equipment, permitted or grandfathered point sources, should do their part to reduce nitrogen oxides (NOx) and volatile organic compound (VOC) emissions.
- **Control strategies should be implemented as expeditiously as practicable** to realize health benefits and prevent imposition of sanctions upon the region.
- **The ozone standard should be attained at the lowest economic and social costs** considering effects on lifestyle to the citizens of the region.
- **Local flexibility should be preserved** to the greatest extent possible.
- **Some emission control strategies are best implemented at the national level**, such as those on automobiles and consumer goods, and, hence, should be accelerated if they contribute to attainment at lower costs and less adverse impacts than other controls.
- **Control strategy options considered should include all technically feasible ones** prioritized by their relative benefit to cost characteristics.
- **Economic incentives should be explored** as part of the area's attainment approach.
- **All reasonable efforts should be made to avoid State Implementation Plan (SIP) disapproval by EPA.** If ozone attainment cannot be reached by reducing ozone precursors to the maximum technically feasible and cost-efficient extent, other options to obtain SIP approval will be explored.
- **Encourage TNRCC to undertake a comprehensive air quality research strategy** to provide additional scientific information necessary for design of ozone control programs which can be reasonably expected to reduce ozone formation and public exposure to ozone.



Clean Air Coalition  
 P. O. Box 22777  
 Houston, TX 77227-2777  
[www.cleanairaction.org](http://www.cleanairaction.org)

A program of the Houston-Galveston Area Council

Address Correction Requested

Bulk Rate  
 U.S. Postage  
 PAID  
 Houston, TX  
 PERMIT NO. 3411

## Every day is another opportunity to clean up the air.

seven counties – Brazoria, Chambers, Fort Bend, Galveston, Liberty, Montgomery, and Waller – must meet national clean air standards by 2007. If the region fails to meet the standards, federal highway funding for future projects may be jeopardized. Such a situation recently occurred in the Atlanta region.

At its December 1998 meeting, the TPC unanimously adopted the principles, which demonstrate a regional commitment to reduce air pollution that should include all individuals and businesses. Key provisions of the principles state that pollution reduction measures should be implemented as soon as practical at the lowest economic and social costs to the region’s citizens while maintaining local flexibility.

H-GAC is taking a leadership role in developing, communi-

cating, and advocating a regional consensus on pollution reduction measures. The signing of *The Principles for Cleaner Air* is an important milestone in the development of a regional air quality plan.

### State Implementation Plan (SIP)

The TNRCC is developing the Houston-Galveston region’s plan for attaining the federal health standard for the pollutant ozone (O<sub>3</sub>). There are two phases covering the next two years: 1999, development of pollution control options and an initial plan; and 2000, development of specific rules implementing the plan. Both phases are critical to our area’s success in meeting current EPA standards and need regional involvement.

Additional information regarding regional pollution standards and the attainment process can be found on the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency ([www.epa.gov](http://www.epa.gov)) and Texas Natural Resource Conservation Commission ([www.tnrcc.state.tx.us](http://www.tnrcc.state.tx.us)) web sites.

### State Implementation Plan (SIP) Timeline 1999-2000

|  |                  |
|--|------------------|
| Pollution Control Options evaluated.....               | 4/40/99          |
| Proposed SIP approved by TNRCC .....                   | 6/16/99          |
| <b>1999 PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD.....</b>                 | <b>7/99-8/99</b> |
| Initial SIP adopted by TNRCC .....                     | 10/20/99         |
| 1999 SIP submitted to EPA.....                         | 11/15/99         |
| Continuing Control Strategy Evaluation.....            | 5/99-4/00        |
| Proposed Rules to implement SIP approved by TNRCC..... | 7/1/00           |
| <b>2000 PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD.....</b>                 | <b>8/00-9/00</b> |
| Final adoption of SIP by TNRCC .....                   | 12/6/00          |
| 2000 SIP submitted to EPA .....                        | 12/29/00         |