



COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORT

OPEN SPACE, ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE

Date: October 28, 2015

Agenda Item #: 3

Agenda Item: Updated National Ambient Air Quality Standards for ground-level ozone.

Vote No action taken.

Sponsors/Department: Austin Transportation Department; CAPCOG

Summary of Discussion

Cari Buetow, Environmental Program Coordinator with the Austin Transportation Department, briefly described the City's role in the partnership with CAPCOG towards the role of better air quality. Andrew Hoekzema, Air Quality Program Manager in CAPCOG's Regional Services Department, made a presentation to explain the NAAQ standards including primary and secondary standards, and how they affect ground level ozone formation. Hoekzema also reviewed the summary of the new ozone standards and explained that the EPA lowered the level of primary and secondary standards from 75 parts per billion to 70 parts per billion, and how this would affect the Central Texas Region.

- *Burn bans*

CM Pool asked if burn bans influence the ozone. Hoekzema explained that particulate matter in the air from situations such as burn bans is measurable and estimable. Recent fire emissions have played a significant role in the ozone season in terms of poor air quality. Pool then asked if an overlay map of recent incidents could be done to then overlay that over what the particulate matter and the ozone measurements are to see what the outcome is. Hoekzema said that emission estimates could be captured this way to measure how much of an impact burns have on any number of pollutants.

- *EPA science*

CM Zimmerman stated that he will be watching the EPA's data over the course of the next few years in order to see how the sensors are affected. Zimmerman also states that the ozone is affected by many natural factors that the EPA cannot control.

Public Comments

None

Direction

Coordinate with the Environmental Commission to take a presentation there in the future.

Recommendation

No action taken.