

Environmental News Brief

Presented by the Baltimore Metropolitan Council for the Baltimore Regional Transportation Board

October 7, 2005

The following news "briefs" highlight recent news regarding transportation-related environmental issues, primarily air quality, affecting the Baltimore region. Please note that this brief is not all inclusive of the variety and magnitude of activities in the region. It is intended for informational purposes only; refer to the source, guidance, or program for additional information.

Proposed Rule to Implement PM2.5 Standard Issued

On September 8, EPA issued the proposed implementation requirements for the fine particle (PM2.5) standard. This national air quality standard was established in 1997. In December 2004, the Baltimore region was designated nonattainment for the PM2.5 standard. Comments on the proposed rule will be accepted for sixty days from the date the notice appears in the Federal Register.

[Click to view a fact sheet on the Proposed Rule to Implement the Fine Particle Standard.](#)

2005 National Clean Diesel Campaign Policy Leaders Summit



Association, is to spur and strengthen diesel retrofit programs at the local, state, and national levels.

[Click for more information and to register for this free conference.](#)

- [Proposed Rule to Implement PM2.5 Standard Issued](#)
- [2005 National Clean Diesel Campaign Policy Leaders Summit](#)
- [SAFETEA-LU Available Online](#)
- [Interim Guidance on SAFETEA-LU Provisions Issued](#)
- [Methodology for PM2.5 Conformity Approved and Online](#)
- [Employee Commute Survey Now Online](#)
- [State of Our Watersheds Conference](#)

SAFETEA-LU Available Online

FHWA has created a new website for the Safe Accountable Flexible Efficient Transportation Equity Act - A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU). SAFETEA-LU is the new federal transportation legislation that was signed on August 10th, 2005. The full text of the legislation, along with fact sheets, funding tables, and summary information are available online.

[Click to view the FHWA SAFETEA-LU website.](#)

Interim Guidance on SAFETEA-LU Provisions Issued

FHWA and FTA have issued interim guidance on various provisions of SAFETEA-LU. According to the interim guidance, MPOs can take advantage of the SAFETEA-LU provisions if they would like to before July 1, 2007, the compliance date for all plans, TIPs and STIPs to comply with SAFETEA-LU planning provisions.

[Click to view the interim guidance.](#)

Methodology for PM2.5 Conformity Approved and Online

EPA has approved BRTB's methodology for performing the fine particulate matter conformity determination for the 2004 Plan and the 2006-2010 TIP. The final draft conformity determination will be available for public review on the Baltimore Metropolitan Council web site later this month. A public meeting will be held at BMC on November 21st, at 5:30 PM, to discuss the results of the fine particulate matter conformity determination.

[Click to view the Tasks & Assumptions for the Conformity Determination of the 2004 Plan and 2006-2010 TIP, for Fine Particulate Matter.](#)

Employee Commute Survey Now Online

The BRTB's 2005 Regional Employee Alternate Commute Survey, completed in August 2005, is now available. The goal of the survey was to determine the attitudes behind employee commuting behavior in the Baltimore region, and employee interest in alternate commute options. Market research was performed by Strategic Consulting & Research of Irvine, CA.

[Click to visit the Baltimore Metropolitan Council web site.](#)

State of Our Watersheds Conference



On Saturday, October 15, the Baltimore County Department of Environmental Protection and Resource Management and the Baltimore City Department of Public Works will be hosting their third State of Our Watersheds Conference at Loch Raven High School. This day-long conference will include discussions on how to manage stormwater from impervious surfaces, along with ways to communicate messages and modify behavior. In the afternoon, there will be an exciting tour of a streambank restoration project.

[Click to find out how to register for this free conference.](#)

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