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CONTACT
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Dear CONTACT,

KDHE and our local Air Quality Improvement Task Force have been working closely together for a number of years to raise awareness of air quality issues and to educate the public and local businesses on what they can do to help out. As you may be aware, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency recently revised the National Ambient Air Quality Standards for Ozone. The new 2008 ozone standard is an 8-hour average concentration of 75 parts per billion. As a result of this revised standard, the state of Kansas must evaluate areas of the state for noncompliance with the ozone standard. This evaluation is conducted for counties that contain or are nearby to an air monitoring station that is monitoring violations of the standard. The outcome of the designation process will be a recommended list of counties in the state that currently monitor or are contributing to 8-hour ozone violations. The evaluation of counties under the new ozone standard has just recently begun.

We will be holding a series of meetings in the Wichita area to discuss the designation process for this recently revised standard. We would like to include county commissioners as well as local government representatives, economic development staff and businesses within these counties. The initial meeting will be a discussion of what the revised ozone standard means for the Kansas counties that make up and surround the Wichita Metropolitan Area as well as the process the state will take in making a designation recommendation to the U.S. EPA regarding these counties.

Information that you can provide pertaining to economic, employment, and population growth will assist the state in making a more-informed decision about which counties will be recommended for an ozone nonattainment designation. As you may know, growth projection information assists the state in determining areas that may be a contributor to ozone formation due to their increasing area, mobile, and point sources of ozone-forming pollutants (e.g. volatile organic compounds or nitrogen oxides).

The schedule for developing the recommendation is rigorous because the state must submit a recommendation for every Kansas county by March 12, 2009. Therefore, we plan to meet with groups of stakeholders starting on June 26. We ask that you or an appropriate representative for your county, city or business attend this meeting. Also, please feel free to include others who you feel may be impacted by this revised standard or should be part of the designation process.

The meeting will be held on June 26, 2008, at the Wichita City Hall, 455 N. Main, First Floor, Wichita, KS. The meeting will be held in the city council chamber from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. We hope that you or an appropriate representative for your county or city will be able to attend. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call Mr. Douglas Watson with the Kansas Department of Health and Environment's Bureau of Air and Radiation at 1000 SW Jackson, Suite 310, Topeka, KS 66612 or by phone at (785) 296-0910. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Rick Brunetti, Director
Bureau of Air and Radiation
Kansas Department of Health and Environment

RB/dlw

CC
Kay Johnson