

**OTC ADOPTS FOUR POINT DECLARATION
REGARDING NEXT STEPS FOR CLEANING UP THE AIR IN THE
NORTHEAST AND MID-ATLANTIC STATES**

(October 8, 1998, Newark, NJ)-The Ozone Transport Commission (OTC) today adopted a declaration of principles regarding the next steps for cleaning up the air in the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic States. In adopting the *Declaration of Principles: Next Steps for Reducing Ground-Level Ozone*, the OTC noted the importance of the recent completion of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA's) plan for reducing ground-level ozone in the eastern United States through regional reductions in emissions of nitrogen oxides (NOx), including NOx from major fossil-fuel fired power plants. Ground-level ozone, the primary ingredient in smog, aggravates asthma, reduces lung capacity, and makes plants and crops more susceptible to pests and disease.

"We're prepared to make additional progress to clean up the air in our region," said Trudy Coxe, Secretary of the Massachusetts Executive Office of Environmental Affairs, and Chair of the OTC. "EPA's recently announced plan provides a foundation for new pollution reductions."

The OTC declaration included the following points:

- **Using Current State And Federal Plans As A Starting Point** - The emission reductions from both EPA's newly finalized plan and OTC's programs to reduce major stationary source emissions are fundamental for meeting air quality goals;
- **Working In Partnership To Make Sure Pollution Reductions Are Actually Achieved** - It is important for OTC States to work together, with EPA, and with States outside the OTR in partnership to make sure that NOx emissions are reduced effectively and expeditiously;
- **Defining New Pollution Reductions For The Future** - New efforts will be undertaken to analyze additional measures to reduce air pollutant emissions in order to meet the new ozone standard, taking into account benefits related to other regional air pollutants; and
- **Focusing On Additional Innovative Approaches For The Future** -The OTC will be considering market-based and other innovative approaches to reduce emissions, encourage early compliance, and lower compliance costs.

Regarding the last point, the OTC has been successfully implementing a market-based NOx emissions trading program for major stationary sources; full implementation of a new, more stringent phase of the OTC program will occur in May of 1999. Emissions trading programs allow those who can reduce emissions most cost effectively to create "credits" which can be traded, thereby lowering compliance costs. EPA used the OTC's experience with its trading program when developing EPA's market-based emissions trading program that was announced on September 24.

Signatories to the declaration include Connecticut, Delaware, the District of Columbia, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island and Vermont. The declaration remains open for additional signatures in the future.

It is likely that additional emission controls will be needed to meet the new ozone standard adopted by EPA last year. The measures the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic States have adopted, in conjunction with EPA's plan, have been projected to meet the old ozone air quality standard. However, new technical information shows that some areas of the eastern United States will probably not meet the new ozone air quality standard, thereby necessitating analysis for new emission control measures over the coming years.

At its last meeting in May, OTC highlighted the importance of EPA taking action on strict new motor vehicle and gasoline sulfur limits by the 2004 model year, and the role of such new limits in meeting the new ozone standard. EPA has indicated that it intends to make a formal proposal on such limits by the end of this year.

The OTC was created by the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990 to coordinate the regional development of control plans for ground-level ozone in the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic States. Connecticut, Delaware, the District of Columbia, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, and Virginia are represented on the OTC.

[Link to the Text of the Declaration of Principles](#)