

Minutes

72nd Meeting of the Joint Advisory Committee for the Improvement of Air Quality in the
Ciudad Juárez, Chihuahua / El Paso, Texas / Doña Ana County, New México Air Basin

<p>Location: City of El Paso Environmental Services Department 7968 San Paulo Dr. Sala de Conferencia Cotton Patch El Paso Texas, 79907</p> <p>May 24, 2018</p>	
JAC Members Attending (Absences** and alternates indicated*)	
U.S.	México
Guy Donaldson, USEPA	M.I. Ana Patricia Martínez, SEMARNAT
*Lisa Torres, TCEQ	**Ing. Manuel Carta, PROFEPA
Michael Baca, NMED	*Gerardo López, COESPRIS
**Jacob Kidd, City of Las Cruces	Dra. Cecilia Olague, SDUE de Chihuahua
Karl Rimkus, City of El Paso	**Ing. Gibrán Solís, CANACINTRA Juárez
John Quinn Freeport-McMoRan Copper and Gold	Maestra Flor Karina Cuevas, Dirección de Ecología de Ciudad Juárez
Elaine Barron, M.D., Citizen	*Ing. Vicente López, IMIP
**Alberto Correa, Capítulo Paso del Norte	**René Franco, Franco y Asociados
David Dubois, NMSU	*Adrián Vásquez Gálvez, UACJ
**Wen-Whai Li, Ph.D., P.E., UTEP	*Ing. Jorge Hernández, NADB
Claudia Valles, El Paso MPO	
Carlos A Rincón, US EPA- Liaison	Biól. Gerardo Tarín, SEMARNAT- Liaison
Eugenia (Gina) Posada, TCEQ - Liaison	
* Alternate	** Not Present

Welcoming and Message from the Co-Chairs:

Co-Chair Guy Donaldson, from EPA Region 6, thanked the City of El Paso for hosting the meeting. He welcomed everyone to the meeting. He discussed how to improve the air quality in this region.

Co-Chair Maestra Ana Patricia Martínez from SEMARNAT welcomed everyone. She mentioned Mexico's effort to improve air quality management programs in the entire country. There are 30 air quality management programs in place and six new programs under development this year. SEMARNAT's goal is to enable each Mexican state to operate an air quality program and to establish an air quality focus for each state, which can involve state and federal government initiatives. This is a great achievement. Mexico is also working with the Pan American Health Organization to develop six ProAires to focus on air quality and health. The population needs to be aware of the problem and protect their health. The public may listen to private physicians more than to environmental authorities. Medical staff can help by raising public awareness in this larger effort and helping to deliver the message.

Introductions were provided by attendees. A quorum was not reached.

Presentation and Approval of Agenda and Previous Minutes- Co-Chair Ana Patricia Martínez corrected the 4th paragraph to read in the minutes, "programs to improve air quality" and omit the description of the monitoring network. On the second page there is another change to correct the presenter's name to Ana Patricia Martínez for the Pollutant Release and Transfer Register presentation.

Public Comments

Discussion on Public Comments & JAC Member Announcements

Karl Rimkus with the City of El Paso updated the JAC on the work in progress with Senator Rodriguez. His environmental committee, the Tire Advisory Committee, the Council of Governments, have adopted scrap tire policy goals, which have a tie to air quality. This effort is relevant to the recycling facility fire in the south of Ciudad Juárez. The County of El Paso Emergency Services District is considering whether to adopt the Outside Storage of Combustible Material, ordinance 017673, which covers the unincorporated areas of the county and incorporated areas outside of El Paso, except for Horizon City. The City of El Paso is the first in Texas to adopt a permit for outside storage of combustible materials as part of its fire code due to fire safety issues, as air quality is also affected when facilities catch on fire. [This permit requires to store the units of material with fire lanes, and insurance depending on the amount of materials stored.] The proposed fire code is under discussion in the County; Mexican counterparts could consider adopting a similar concept at the state or local level.

John Quinn asked if it only applied to recyclers or any industrial facility.

Karl Rimkus explained it applies to combustible materials stored outdoors, whether the materials are a waste, a product, in operations, or in storage. It applies if facilities have more than 75 cubic yards of combustible materials outdoors. Most of the materials in El Paso are composed of plastic, pallets, and tires.

Flor Karina Cuevas from Ecology Department in Ciudad Juárez brought up the fire on May 2, 2018. She said the fire provided a reality check as to the limits for mutual aid. Both countries have the same airshed. Incidents in one country affect the other. The binational collaboration agreements in place may not apply to a real situation. The agreements may not enable a real-life collaboration where tools such as manpower, technical, or supplies are exchanged. The agreements do not have the legal framework or political framework for a trans-boundary response. At the meeting with Office of Emergency Management it was acknowledged that a better legal framework needed to be developed.

Paso del Norte Air Quality Report by Carlos Rincon, USEPA

Please see the report at www.cccjac.org

The state standard for H₂S is 80 parts per billion. Michael Baca asked how the state implements the standard in this situation with the waste treatment plant in Ciudad Juárez, where there is no federal standard.

Dr. Carlos Rincon brought up that the work done back in the 80's in the Big Bend region. The airshed work can enable cooperation to adjust to the challenges.

Dr. Patricia Juárez from UTEP asked if there were no H₂S exceedances on the American side from waste treatment water plants.

Dr. Carlos Rincon stated the source for these exceedances is the waste water treatment plant in Ciudad Juárez. There are not exceedances recorded within the US, according to the data collected.

Ms. Lila Rojo asked what type of corrective action is taken when there are exceedances of determined values.

Dr. Carlos Rincon answered that the waste water treatment plant personnel will be at this meeting to give a presentation and answer those questions.

The Facebook live session ended due to a weak internet connection.

ProAire Chihuahua (Urban Transportation). Public Transportation Improvement Plan for Ciudad Juárez by Dra. Cecilia Olague Caballero, SEDUE

Please see the presentation at www.cccjac.org

A member of the public asked if the buses use propane gas. Dr. Olague said they could operate with natural gas or even electric. The team is exploring solar technologies, such as solar panels and intermodal stations.

Self-introduction via conference call of Adrian Vazquez responsible for the monitoring network at UACJ and representing Dr. Alba Y. Corral from UACJ. An official quorum was established.

Paso del Norte Collaborative K12 GIS Capacity Building and Research for Environmental Quality Monitoring by Stanley Mubako, Ph.D., UTEP

Please see the presentation at www.cccjac.org

Dr. Patricia Juárez asked if the topics are only for health, humanities, or what kind of teachers can apply to get the training. Can a school district apply for this program and training or just a school?

Dr. Mubako answered that GIS technology can fit to any field of expertise. GIS is utilized in health, business, etc. This is a program aim to train the trainers. Teachers can train the students.

Dr. Carlos Rincon asked for an update of the program for the next JAC meeting in September.

Rearranging of the Heavy Load Truck Traffic at the Zaragoza and Americas International Bridges by Lic. Virginia Dorante, DJC & Global Services, Inc.

Please see the presentation at www.cccjac.org

Dr. Patricia Juárez asked if Mexican and American Customs seen this information. Ms. Dorantes said this is the first time she presents this plan.

North Wastewater Treatment Plant operations program and Sulfuric Acid emissions control by Biologist Francisco J. Núñez Sánchez, JMAS-Director for Sanitation and Regulation: (No Presenter)

Texas Emissions Reduction Program, TERP 101 by Nate Hickman, TCEQ

Please see the presentation at www.cccjac.org

Dr. Elaine Barron asked how Texas coordinates emissions with freeway construction in the entire state and idling traffic due to these construction sites. Does TxDOT work in conjunction with TCEQ?

Mr. Hickman answered by saying TCEQ and EPA regulate stationary point sources. TCEQ does not regulate mobile sources. The incentive programs try to change behavior through funding. He brought up the rail relocation improvement program. He provided an example where a section of rail that constitutes a bad intersection and the program provides funds to move it out of the way and reduce idling. The focus of funding is only in the State of Texas. The programs are voluntary. The agencies do coordinate and discuss plans regularly.

Ms. Lila Rojo asked about the disposal of old trucks in an environmentally appropriate manner.

Mr. Hickman answered that contractors do site visits. The old vehicle engine is destroyed, and the scrap is recycled.

A member of the public asked how does TERP interact with stationary sources? The New Technology Implementation Grant program intent is to encourage participants to go above and beyond the permit expectations to reduce emissions of pollutants.

Dr. Mubako asked if old buses stay in the US. Export of school buses is possible to other countries.

Co-Chair Guy Donaldson said TERP is a remarkable Texas program. A great number of states are going to retrofit diesel engines.

AQ Designations in NM by Guy Donaldson

Co-Chair Guy Donaldson from EPA Region 6 said EPA has taken some actions that impact the airshed in this region. These actions require the NAAQS to be reviewed every five years as air quality standards to protect human health. EPA issued a new ozone standard at 70 ppb in 2015. EPA is required to identify areas that do meet or do not meet the standard, and EPA has a process to follow to make such decisions. On April 30, the EPA Administrator designated El Paso County as a so-called 'attainment/unclassified' region but Doña Ana County as non-attainment. Part of the decision based on exceptional events that led to such designations.

Mr. Karl Rimkus asked the date for this designation.

Co-Chair Guy Donaldson stated it was April 30, but it was announced the following day. The Governors of Texas and New Mexico revised the recommendations. EPA was consistent with both recommendations.

Reports from Subcommittees: PROAIRE, Health and New Voting Members Subcommittees

The Pro Aire Subcommittee meets regularly. The Subcommittee works on health measures and strategies with the State of Chihuahua.

The Health Subcommittee is led by Dr. Alba Corral of UACJ and reporting back at the next JAC meeting. On 06/11 Suttron plans to work with the City of Juárez and INECC.

The Voting Members Subcommittee is looking for a Mexican entity that acts like the El Paso County. Dra Olague will identify the agency and report back to the JAC.

Comments from the Public

David Baake, NM Environmental Attorney

Please see the presentation at www.cccjac.org

Mr. Karl Rimkus asked what is the national inventory of the US fleet? The answer was 2 to 3 million. What percentage of those trucks is drayage? The answer was that there are incentives for drayage trucks, but there are also other factors. The truck fleet may not aid achievement of a SIP because of their emission factors.

Mr. Baake is willing to share the documents to create awareness of the issue.

Dr. Elaine Barron discussed the reversal of environmental rules that affect poor communities and can result in an environmental justice issue.

Attendees that signed requesting to speak and address JAC

Dr. Patricia Juárez from UTEP asked if the JAC plans on acting on the Familia Unidas' request with the alleged issue of air quality and the EPISD bus hub building contract. This might be an environmental justice issue.

Karl Rimkus mentioned the City of El Paso and the TCEQ regional office are engaged in discussions with Familias Unidas del Chamizal. This case is handled under zoning. A court ruling from 1973 prevents the City from exerting the zoning authority. City Representative Evelina (Lina) Ortega is leading the conversations with Familias Unidas del Chamizal.

Next Meeting Date: September 20th in Las Cruces, NM.