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ADEQ Issues Draft Clean-Car Rules to Cut Greenhouse Gas Emissions from Vehicles

PHOENIX (Jan. 10, 2008) -- Arizona Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ) Director Steve Owens announced today that ADEQ has issued draft rules to cut greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) from vehicles and filed its notice of proposed rule making with the Secretary of State's Office.

The new rules are being developed pursuant to an Executive Order on climate change issued last year by Gov. Janet Napolitano. The Arizona Climate Change Advisory Group (CCAG), which Gov. Napolitano appointed, unanimously recommended that Arizona adopt the new GHG reduction standards.

The proposed rules include tailpipe emission standards for new vehicles, requirements for the sale of some zero-emissions vehicles in the state and reduction of greenhouse gas emissions overall from new vehicles sold in Arizona.

"This is an important step toward reducing greenhouse gas emissions in Arizona and is a critical element in our effort to address climate change," ADEQ Director Owens said. "Our goal is to have a final rule approved by late spring or early summer."

During 1990-2005, greenhouse gas emissions in Arizona grew by 56 percent, the fastest rate of growth in the country. If unchecked, Arizona's GHG emissions are projected to grow by 140 percent between 1990-2020 and by 200 percent between 1990-2040. Roughly 40 percent of Arizona's GHG emissions come from vehicles.

"If we're going to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in Arizona we need to cut emissions from vehicles," Director Owens said.

The rules will apply to vehicles beginning with the 2011 model year. Arizona's rules will be based on the Clean Car program adopted by the State of California. States are authorized under the federal Clean Air Act to adopt California's vehicle emissions standards.

California's standards will become effective when the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency grants a waiver to California under the Clean Air Act. EPA announced in late December that it had decided to deny the waiver to California. Arizona has joined 15 other states in a lawsuit brought by California against the EPA to reverse EPA's decision to deny the waiver and to uphold the right of states to regulate greenhouse gas pollution from automobiles.

In addition to California, 12 other states have adopted the California GHG vehicle standards. They are Connecticut, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Mexico, New York, New Jersey, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont and Washington. Along with Arizona, at least four other states – Colorado, Florida, Montana and Utah – also have announced plans to adopt the California GHG vehicle standards.