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ADEQ Announces That Full-Service Air Quality Forecasting for PM-10, Ozone Begins Today For Yuma Residents

PHOENIX (Feb. 29, 2012) – Arizona Department of Environmental Quality officials announced that the agency’s first full-service air quality forecasting system outside Phoenix, including daily forecasts, begins today in Yuma.

Recording of data from an air quality monitor that measures levels of Particulate Matter-10, coarse dust, began this morning for a daily color-coded Air Quality Index which is online at <http://azdeq.gov/environ/air/ozone/yumef.pdf>. On Thursday, that PM-10 forecast will be joined by a daily ozone forecast from data recorded by another air quality monitor placed in the western Arizona city.

“It’s a landmark day for all of us at ADEQ being able to deliver this level of air quality forecasting service outside the Phoenix metropolitan area for the first time,” ADEQ Director Henry Darwin said. “Our mission is to protect the public health and environment of Arizona and it’s important that we share more and more data with people throughout the state so they can use that information to help protect their health. It’s also important that those who generate PM-10 be aware of weather conditions and take precautions to reduce the dust.”

The Yuma region has been listed in non-attainment for PM-10 standards by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

“It’s our hope that tools like this daily air quality forecasting system coupled with continued monitoring will help correct that situation,” Director Darwin said during an afternoon press conference at the Yuma County Board of Supervisors auditorium.

For the past eight years, ADEQ had a forecast that predicted wind speeds and the risk of dust caused by the winds for three days after issuance of the forecast in the Yuma region. That service ends with the implementation of this public health oriented air quality forecast.

Also at the press conference, Yuma Tobacco Asthma Coalition Coordinator Gloria Cisneros announced that the Yuma Flag Program is adding 13 school, community and health center sites to its program, which flies different colored flags to demonstrate air quality conditions.

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