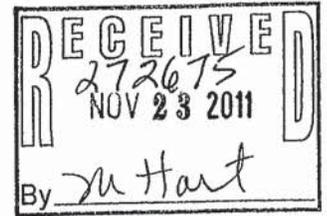




STATE OF ARIZONA

JANICE K. BREWER
GOVERNOR



EXECUTIVE OFFICE

November 18, 2011

The Honorable Pete Rios
Pinal County Supervisor, District 1
P.O. Box 827
Florence, AZ 85232

Dear Supervisor Rios:

I am writing in response to your October 21, 2011 letter that sought help to find methods to reduce or prevent serious vehicle accidents that occur as a result of windblown dust within Pinal County. I share your concerns about the impacts that windblown dust can have on public health and safety. As a result, I have asked the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ), to coordinate with the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT), Arizona Land Department and the Arizona Department of Public Safety (DPS) to review their current authorities and responsibilities as they relate to windblown dust.

While meteorological conditions cannot be controlled, it is possible for meteorologists to predict upcoming weather events that commonly cause windblown dust. The National Weather Service will often issue warnings regarding blowing dust in specific areas. ADEQ has also been issuing forecasts identifying the risk of dust generation for certain areas of the state that are within their primary jurisdiction.

In addition, ADOT has been working with stakeholders, including the federal government, on the issue of reduced visibility created by dust storms. If ADOT receives advance notice, including an advisory or warning posted by the National Weather Service, ADOT uses its system of overhead message boards to advise drivers of blowing dust or limited visibility ahead. Also, ADOT is currently testing a Dust Storm Warning System along I-10 east of Willcox. The system, which went operational in August, includes weather monitoring stations, closed-circuit cameras, warning signs with flashing lights as well as overhead message boards. It's designed to detect weather changes such as increasing winds and reduced visibility along the 20-mile stretch between Bowie and San Simon. This technology, we believe, holds some promise for the future.

Also, ADEQ will soon be working with stakeholders to further address dust issues in Pinal County. Under the requirements of the Clean Air Act, ADEQ will be developing a State Implementation Plan (SIP) to achieve the national ambient air quality standards (NAAQS) for coarse and fine dust (also known as PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5}) in portions of Pinal County. The SIP will identify the sources of dust and will ultimately result in additional strategies and controls that should reduce or prevent the risk that dust poses to public health. I have asked ADEQ to examine the issues identified in your letter during this process.

I thank you for your letter regarding this important matter of public health and safety. To the extent that additional expertise and the development of relationships to accomplish similar goals is necessary, I encourage you and your staff be involved in ADEQ's upcoming Pinal County air quality State Implementation Plan stakeholder process.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Janice K. Brewer". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Janice K. Brewer
Governor

cc: The Honorable Senator Steve Pierce, Senate President
The Honorable Representative Andy Tobin, Speaker of the House
The Honorable Senator John Nelson, Chair, Senate Natural Resources & Transportation Committee
The Honorable Representative Amanda Reeve, Chair, House Environment Committee
The Honorable Vic Williams, Chair, House Transportation Committee
Jared Blumenfeld, Regional Administrator, U.S. EPA Region IX
Henry Darwin, Director, Arizona Department of Environmental Quality
John Halikowski, Director, Arizona Department of Transportation
Maria Baier, Commissioner, Arizona State Land Department
Robert Halliday, Director, Arizona Department of Public Safety
Fritz A. Behring, Pinal County Manager