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## **ADEQ, Maricopa County, and MAG Making Progress on Dust Control in Valley as Monday's High Winds Fall Below Health Watch Standard**

PHOENIX (March 8, 2011) – As winds of more than 40 mph rifled through the Valley on Monday, Arizona Department of Environmental Quality forecasters were pleasantly surprised by the lack of dust kicked up by the fast-moving front.

A Health Watch was issued early Monday which predicted that particulate matter levels would exceed 133 micrograms per cubic meter for the day. A High Pollution Advisory is issued if the particulate matter levels are expected to exceed 154 micrograms per cubic meter for the day. But the highest reading of the day from air quality monitors in Maricopa County was 116.4 micrograms per cubic meter in west Chandler. None of the other monitors exceeded 100 in the Valley. Other monitors throughout the State did not fare as well, with exceedances recorded at three separate monitors in Pinal County.

“This is an example of how the 2007 Five Percent Plan to reduce dust is producing results,” said ADEQ Director Henry Darwin. “We withdrew the plan from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency review in late January to address EPA’s technical concerns, not because we thought it was flawed. ADEQ, Maricopa County and MAG’s efforts will only make the plan that much better.”

EPA proposed to partially approve and partially disapprove the original Five Percent Plan, a particulate matter air quality plan prepared by the Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG) and submitted by ADEQ to EPA in 2007. The plan called for significant reductions in emissions of particulate matter 10 microns or less, also known as PM-10, from a variety of sources throughout the Valley.

As a direct result of the air quality plans that were submitted between 1990 and 2009, the annual average concentration of PM-10 within the Phoenix area has declined about 25 percent.

Maricopa County had one violation of the PM-10 standards at a single monitor in the West Valley during 2010. If a monitor has an average of more than one exceedance per year over a three year period, the area is classified as non-attainment for the PM-10 standards.

“ADEQ, the Maricopa County Air Quality Department, and MAG are all dedicated to this most important effort to further protect public health in this region,” Darwin said. “But without the continuing efforts of the cities, industry and agriculture in following the plan to reduce dust, these types of results wouldn’t be possible.”

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