



## METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON AIR QUALITY COMMITTEE (MWAQC)

December 03, 2025  
12:30 P.M. – 2:00 P.M.  
Virtual Meeting

Chair: Tom Dernoga, Prince George's County

### MEETING SUMMARY

#### MWAQC MEMBERS AND ALTERNATES

- Tom Dernoga, Prince George's County (Chair)
- David Snyder, City of Falls Church (Vice Chair)
- Tom Ballou, Virginia Department of Environmental Quality
- Virginia Burke, Maryland Department of Transportation
- Collin Burrell, District Department of Energy and Environment
- Jason Groth, Charles County
- Joseph Jakuta, District Department of Energy and Environment
- Keith Levenchenko, Montgomery County
- Sonia Vasquez Luna, City of Manassas
- Kristin Mink, Montgomery County
- Shannon Moore, Frederick County
- Tom Peterson, City of Fairfax
- Jim Ponticello, Virginia Department of Transportation
- Evandro Santos, Prince William County
- Laurie-Anne Sayles, Montgomery County
- Roger Thunnel, Maryland Department of the Environment
- William Washburn, Air and Climate Public Advisory Committee
- Kristen Weaver, City of Greenbelt

- Jeff Bronstein, UCLA
- Tony Jones, Montgomery County
- Regina Moore, Virginia Department of Transportation
- Yolanda Pensmith, Loudoun County
- Shayla Stafford, Prince George's County

#### COG STAFF

- Alissa Boggs, COG Department of Environmental Programs
- Leah Boggs, COG Department of Environmental Programs
- Heidi Bonnafon, COG Department of Environmental Programs
- Robert Christopher, COG Department of Environmental Programs
- Robert d'Abadie, COG Department of Transportation Planning
- Jen Desimone, COG Department of Environmental Programs
- Jeff King, COG Climate, Energy, and Air Program Director
- Sunil Kumar, COG Department of Environmental Programs
- Mark Moran, COG Department of Transportation Planning
- Dusan Vuksan, COG Department of Transportation Planning

#### OTHERS

## **1. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD, APPROVE MINUTES, CHAIR'S REMARKS**

*Tom Dernoga, MWAQC Chair*

Chair Tom Dernoga called the meeting to order. Members and participants were requested to enter their names and affiliations into the chat for attendance purposes. The committee meeting summary from September 24, 2025, was approved without any changes.

## **2. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

MWAQC Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) – Joseph Jakuta (DOEE)

MWAQC-TAC held a call on September 12:

- Members discussed the status of the 2015 Ozone NAAQS Redesignation Request (RR)/Maintenance Plan (MP) Inventory, focusing on milestone years 2017, 2022, 2032, and 2038.
- The committee reviewed sensitivity results from the Transportation Planning Board (TPB) regarding alternative vehicle fuel types and their impact on emissions.
- Participants were briefed on NOAA's ozone air quality modeling for the 2023 and 2024 seasons.
- The committee began preliminary discussions regarding potential contingency measures for the maintenance plan.

Air and Climate Public Advisory Committee (ACPAC) – William Washburn (ACPAC Chair)

ACPAC held a webinar meeting on November 17:

- The committee received a briefing on the draft Environmental Justice (EJ) Toolkit refresh, which updates the original 2017 version.
- Members heard a presentation from the Energy Justice Lab regarding housing energy insecurity and affordability.
- A subcommittee was appointed to develop the 2026 slate of officer nominations.
- The committee is actively recruiting new members from across the COG region for the upcoming year.

Clean Air Partners – Jen Desimone (COG Staff)

Clean Air Partners have been involved in the following:

- The organization concluded its 2025 summer campaign and is currently planning initiatives for 2026.
- In conjunction with Air Quality Awareness Week in May 2026, Clean Air Partners will host its third annual gas-powered lawnmower exchange.
- The regional event, held in partnership with ACE Hardware, allows residents to exchange gas-powered equipment for electric mowers, trimmers, and blowers.

Climate, Energy, and Environment Policy Committee (CEEPC) – Jeff King (COG Climate, Energy, and Air Program Director on behalf of CEEPC leadership)

CEEPC held a webinar meeting on November 19:

- The meeting focused on regional sharing of best practices for climate mitigation and resilience.
- The committee received a presentation from the Board of Step Institute in Germany regarding international climate action strategies.
- Leadership hosted a Mid-Atlantic Climate Leaders roundtable to discuss collaborative environmental goals.

- Staff provided an update on a new global private-sector initiative aimed at enhancing carbon accounting frameworks.

### 3. LOCAL AND STATE UPDATES

#### *Local Members and State Air Agencies*

- Tom Ballou (Air Data Analysis & Planning Director at Virginia Department of Environmental Quality) reported that Virginia successfully submitted its second 10-year regional haze plan to the EPA at the end of October.
- Joseph Jakuta (District Department of Energy and Environment) shared several updates for the District of Columbia:
  - The regional haze progress report for the second planning period was submitted at the end of October.
  - A rule proposal was published on November 28 aimed at streamlining the permitting process for rotor control regulations, with the comment period closing on December 29.
  - A request for applicants for a program to electrify private-sector medium and heavy-duty diesel vehicles is expected to be released before the next committee meeting.
- Maryland Members and State Air Agencies reported having no updates at this time.

### 4. MWAQC NOMINATING COMMITTEE FOR 2026 OFFICERS

#### *Tom Dernoğa, MWAQC Chair*

- The nominating committee—composed of Shannon Moore (Frederick County), Collin Burrell (District of Columbia), and Kenny Boddye (Prince William County)—presented the recommended 2026 slate of officers.
- The following slate of officers was nominated for the 2026 term:
  - **Chair:** David Snyder (City of Falls Church)
  - **Maryland Vice Chair:** Alan Hew (City of College Park)
  - **Virginia Vice Chair:** Sonia Vasquez Luna (City of Manassas)
  - **District Vice Chair:** Vacant
- Staff reported that they are coordinating with the District of Columbia Council to identify a nominee for the District Vice Chair position and intend to bring a nomination to the committee at a future meeting.

**Action: The committee voted unanimously to approve the 2026 slate of officers as presented.**

### 5. 2015 OZONE STANDARD MAINTENANCE PLAN AND REDESIGNATION REQUEST

#### *Sunil Kumar, COG Environmental Engineer*

Sunil Kumar provided an update on the development of the maintenance plan and redesignation request for the 2015 ozone standard. He noted that the Washington D.C. region has maintained attainment of the 70 parts per billion (ppb) standard since 2021, with current draft data for 2023–2025 showing a design value of 69 ppb. Following the EPA’s Clean Data Determination, which became effective on May 5, 2025, the region is formally authorized to proceed with the redesignation process. Staff are currently preparing emission inventories for the milestone years 2017, 2022, 2032, and 2038 using the MOVES5 model. A key focus of the technical evaluation involves determining the projected electric vehicle (EV) share of the regional fleet, which significantly impacts future motor vehicle emission

budgets. The final plan will include contingency measures to ensure a rapid response should the region exceed the standard in the future. The committee expects to review a draft of the plan in early 2026, with a formal vote for approval targeted for the summer.

**Action: The committee received a briefing on the ozone standard maintenance plan and redesignation request.**

## **6. ACPAC ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE TOOLKIT**

*Heidi Bonnafon, COG Environmental Planner*

Heidi Bonnafon briefed the committee on the refreshed Environmental Justice (EJ) Toolkit, an initiative led by the Air and Climate Public Advisory Committee (ACPAC) over the past year. The toolkit serves as an update to the original 2017 version and is designed to provide local jurisdictions with enhanced outreach and communication strategies for engaging with overburdened communities. Ms. Bonnafon highlighted that the refresh includes updated mapping resources, best practices for meaningful community involvement, and local case studies to guide regional air quality and climate equity efforts. The committee discussed how the toolkit could be integrated into local planning processes to better identify and address environmental disparities.

**Action: The committee received the briefing.**

## **7. AIR POLLUTION AND PARKINSON'S DISEASE**

*Jeff Bronstein, UCLA Director of the Levine Family Movement Disorder Center and Professor of Neurology*

Dr. Jeff Bronstein presented research findings regarding the emerging link between ambient air pollution and Parkinson's Disease (PD). He explained that PD is a progressive neurodegenerative disorder, and while approximately 10-15% of cases are linked to genetics, the vast majority are likely driven by environmental and lifestyle factors. Dr. Bronstein highlighted studies conducted in California's Central Valley that demonstrate a significant association between long-term exposure to fine particulate matter (PM2.5) and nitrogen dioxide (NO2) and an increased risk of developing PD. The presentation detailed the biological pathways through which pollutants may trigger the misfolding of alpha-synuclein proteins, potentially entering the central nervous system through the gut or olfactory system. The committee discussed the specific toxicity of different components of air pollution, the impacts of wildfire smoke, and the potential correlation between air quality and other neurodegenerative conditions like Alzheimer's disease.

**Action: The committee received the briefing.**

## **8. ADJOURN**

*Tom Dernoga, MWAQC Chair*

Chair Tom Dernoga adjourned the meeting. The next MWAQC meeting is scheduled for February 25, 2026.