Metropolitan Washington
Council of Governments

METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON AIR QUALITY COMMITTEE (MWAQC)

October 21, 2026
10:00 A.M. – 11:30 A.M.
Virtual Meeting

Chair: Dave Snyder, Falls Church

MEETING SUMMARY

MWAQC MEMBERS AND ALTERNATES

- Collin Burrell, District Department of Energy and Environment
- Joseph Jakuta, District Department of Energy and Environment
- Jessica Gaetano, Calvert County
- Jason Groth, Charles County
- Alan Hew, City of College Park
- Kristen Weaver, City of Greenbelt
- Amy Knesel, City of Greenbelt
- Michelle Blair, City of Laurel
- Nekesa Matlock, City of Laurel
- Kristin Mink, Montgomery County
- Tom Dernoga, Prince George's County
- Emily Bull, Maryland Department of the Environment
- Virginia Burke, Maryland Department of Transportation
- Kari Snyder, Maryland Department of Transportation
- Jacinta Greene, City of Alexandria
- Tom Peterson, City of Fairfax
- David Snyder, City of Falls Church (Chair)
- Sonia Vasquez Luna, City of Manassas
- Evandro Santos, Prince William County
- Tom Ballou, Virginia Department of Environmental Quality
- Doris McLeod, Virginia Department of Environmental Quality

OTHERS

- Abigail Rivas
- William Washburn, Air and Climate Public Advisory Committee
- Taylor Ware, Prince George's County
- Samuel Kay, District Department of Energy and Environment
- Elizabeth Spike, Clean Air Partners
- Yi Sun, Prince William County

COG STAFF

- Jen Desimone, COG Department of Environmental Programs
- Sunil Kumar, COG Department of Environmental Programs
- Jeff King, COG Climate, Energy, and Air Program Director
- Alissa Boggs, COG Department of Environmental Programs
- Leah Boggs, COG Department of Environmental Programs
- Robert Christopher, COG Department of Environmental Programs
- Dusan Vuksan, COG Department of Transportation Planning
- JC Park, COG Department of Transportation Planning
- Robert D'Abadie, COG Department of Transportation Planning

1. CALL TO ORDER, PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD, APPROVE MINUTES

Dave Snyder, MWAQC Chair

Chair Dave Snyder called the meeting to order after staff confirmed that a quorum was present. Members were asked to enter their names and affiliations in the meeting chat for attendance purposes and were reminded that the meeting was being recorded. No members of the public were registered to comment, and no additional public comments were offered. The committee unanimously approved the July 22, 2026 meeting summary.

2. COMMITTEE REPORTS

The MWAQC Technical Advisory Committee reported that it had reviewed the 2015 ozone-standard redesignation request and maintenance plan, including Virginia's technical corrections to the point-source inventories and proposed responses to public comments. The committee recommended MWAQC approval of the plan. Members also discussed initial second maintenance plans for the 2008 ozone standard and the 1997 annual fine-particle standard, as well as current ozone-season air-quality data.

The Air and Climate Public Advisory Committee reported on its memorandum concerning enhanced air-quality monitoring, which was being distributed through the committee structure for consideration. ACTPAC also recognized five 2026 Climate Awards recipients: the City of College Park, Arlington County, the Center for Community Engagement, Environmental Justice and Health and Empowering Communities for a Healthier Mid-Atlantic Region, Prince William County Public Schools, and Neighborhood Sun. ACTPAC further summarized its September discussion of utility disconnections and energy affordability, including the effects of rising energy burdens and potential policy approaches such as eliminating shutoff penalties and reconnection fees and addressing utility debt.

Clean Air Partners reported that its summer outreach campaign concluded with Ozone Action Month events in Falls Church, the District of Columbia, and Greenbelt. The organization plans winter outreach events with Loudoun County focused on reducing emissions, conserving energy, and improving air quality, and has begun planning for the 2027 campaign.

The Climate, Energy and Environment Policy Committee reported on its September 23 meeting. Members received an update on Montgomery County's climate-action progress, including clean-energy adoption, electric-bus deployment, and building energy performance standards. COG staff also introduced a new climate and energy progress dashboard and requested committee input on energy and environmental considerations for the region's comprehensive economic development strategy. The next CEEPC meeting was scheduled for November 18.

3. LOCAL AND STATE UPDATES

Virginia Department of Environmental Quality staff noted that, in addition to the redesignation request and maintenance plan considered by MWAQC, Virginia planned to release two related State Implementation Plan revisions for public comment in early November. The revisions would address and certify the Commonwealth's current nonattainment new-source-review program.

4. MWAQC NOMINATING COMMITTEE FOR 2027 OFFICERS

Dave Snyder, MWAQC Chair

Chair Snyder appointed Collin Burrell of the District of Columbia, Jason Groth of Charles County, and Kenny Boddye of Prince William County to serve on the nominating committee. The committee will develop a proposed slate of 2027 officers for consideration at the December MWAQC meeting.

5. 2015 OZONE STANDARD MAINTENANCE PLAN AND REDESIGNATION REQUEST

Sunil Kumar, COG Environmental Engineer

Sunil Kumar summarized the public comments received on the metropolitan Washington region's maintenance plan and request for redesignation to attainment for the 2015 ozone standard, as well as the air agencies' proposed responses. Comments submitted in the District of Columbia addressed remaining unhealthy-air days, possible changes in federal enforcement, and continued State Implementation Plan obligations. Staff responded that unhealthy ozone days have declined substantially, the region's recent design value is below the 70-parts-per-billion standard, existing controls would remain enforceable, and the plan includes contingency measures if future violations occur. Staff also noted the District's expanded monitoring and regional resources supporting local air-quality and environmental-justice actions.

Comments submitted in Virginia addressed retention of existing control measures, the schedule for implementing contingency measures, nonattainment new-source-review and reasonably available control technology requirements, and emissions associated with data centers. Virginia DEQ affirmed that existing SIP controls would remain in place and retained the 24-month contingency-measure schedule consistent with EPA guidance. Virginia was preparing related certification documents for public review and expected to complete them by the end of the year. DEQ also explained that data-center emissions are represented in the point- and nonpoint-source inventories and that permits, controls, monitoring, and contingency provisions provide additional safeguards.

Staff corrected duplicate point-source emissions and revised emergency-generator calculations for the 2022, 2032, and 2038 inventories. The corrections changed some totals and available emissions buffers but did not alter the plan's conclusion. Projected volatile organic compound and nitrogen oxide emissions remain below the attainment-year levels through 2038. The on-road motor-vehicle emissions budgets were unchanged because the corrections did not affect the on-road inventory. Public comments, agency responses, and supporting revisions were incorporated into the final plan materials.

Chair Snyder asked what the public should take away from the action. Staff emphasized that the region is meeting current ozone and fine-particle standards, has made substantial long-term progress, and is committing to maintain those gains. The maintenance plan preserves existing controls and identifies contingency measures that could be implemented if the region violates the ozone standard in the future.

Action: The committee unanimously approved the 2015 ozone standard maintenance plan and redesignation request for submission to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

6. 2026 OZONE SEASON AND FINE-PARTICLE UPDATE

Sunil Kumar, COG Environmental Engineer

Mr. Kumar reviewed preliminary air-quality data for March 1 through September 30, 2026. Most ozone days were in the good range, with several moderate days, a small number of unhealthy-for-sensitive-groups days, and one unhealthy day on July 17. Long-term data show a substantial decline in high-ozone days since the late 1990s. Staff also noted that high temperatures alone are now less likely to produce an ozone exceedance because precursor emissions have declined. The preliminary 2024–

2026 ozone design value was 68 parts per billion, two parts per billion below the 2015 standard.

Fine-particle concentrations have also declined over the long term, although recent exceedances have been influenced by exceptional events. Staff highlighted elevated particle levels associated with July 4 fireworks and Canadian wildfire smoke on July 17 and 18. A modeled animation showed that the fireworks plume moved through the region, with some of the most concentrated areas passing between permanent monitors before returning toward the District. Chair Snyder noted that examining the causes of individual high-pollution days helps the committee distinguish regional emissions trends from events outside the region's immediate control.

Action: Received presentation.

7. CLEAN AIR PARTNERS LEAD TEACHER LEARNING COMMUNITY

Elizabeth Spike, Clean Air Partners Education Program Manager

Elizabeth Spike presented an update on Clean Air Partners' K–12 education program and Lead Teacher Learning Community. The program uses a train-the-trainer model to strengthen teachers' confidence and capacity to provide air-quality and climate education across the Baltimore-Washington region. Participation has grown from four teachers in 2023 to approximately 15 teachers in 2024–2025 and 40 teachers in a June 2026 summer learning session.

Teachers use the free On the Air curriculum, an interdisciplinary, place-based resource aligned with Next Generation Science Standards and Virginia Standards of Learning. Its five modules address local air pollutants and incorporate real-time monitoring tools, low-cost sensors, dashboards, and datasets. Returning teachers serve as mentors, extending the program's reach and supporting adoption in classrooms, green teams, and environmental clubs, including schools pursuing Maryland Green School goals.

The program also supports public-event outreach, science-fair judging, student internships, conference presentations, and participation on science and education advisory bodies. Ms. Spike encouraged MWAQC members to support teacher recruitment and connect Clean Air Partners with local-government programs, outreach opportunities, and professional networks.

Action: Received presentation.

8. ADJOURN

Dave Snyder, MWAQC Chair

With no additional business raised, the committee unanimously approved a motion to adjourn. Chair Snyder thanked members and staff for their work to protect and improve the region's air quality.