



**Pima County Department of Environmental Quality**  
 150 W. Congress Street  
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 (520) 740-3340  
 www.deq.pima.gov

**Got Dust? Keep it Down!**

**Spring 2007, Volume 3, Issue 2**

## The Dirt on Dust

The *Dirt on Dust* newsletter provides information about regulations and airborne dust control methods to protect the health of our community and keep Pima County in compliance with national air quality health standards. Please share this information with your co-workers and/or employees in your company newsletters, safety meetings, payroll enclosures or e-mail distribution for company-wide awareness of this very important topic.

### Windy Days Are Not Exempt from Taking Precautions

According to the National Weather Service, Tucson had 52 days where wind speeds exceeded 25mph for at least two minutes in duration in 2006 (www.weather.gov). They also stated the months when Tucson tends to have the highest number of high wind days is March, April, and May. High winds make it much more difficult to control dust from becoming airborne. In communicating with some contractors, there was some confusion as to the applicability of The Visibility Limiting Standard in 17.16.050.D of the Pima County Code during high wind events. This subsection states that no person shall allow visible emissions (fugitive dust) to leave property boundary lines without taking reasonable dust control measures commensurate with the size and scope of the emission source. Subsection D.2 states that 17.16.050.D shall not apply when speeds exceed 25mph, however, appropriate control measures still need to be employed. Click on [deq.pima.gov/air/NEAP/construction.htm](http://deq.pima.gov/air/NEAP/construction.htm) for suggestions of dust control methods.

### Once Upon a Windy Time...

On a windy fall day in 2006, one of PDEQ's dust inspectors was performing dust surveillance. While at one vacant construction site, winds were found to be gusting around 30mph. The contractor had not been working on this site for some time, and it was apparent that the site had been stabilized before they stopped work. Although gusty winds blew significant amounts of dust across property boundary lines, the contractor was not issued an enforcement violation, simply for the fact that they took precautions to prevent dust from becoming airborne. After visiting this site, the inspector investigated another site where winds were blowing excessive amounts of particulates into the air. The wind speed read 22mph, and any dust control measures that may have been employed were not sufficient. As a result, a *Notice of Opportunity to Correct* was issued, outlining the deficiencies that needed to be corrected.



*You must take reasonable precautions to keep dust from becoming airborne, even when winds exceed 25mph.*

Keeping dust down is not only necessary to avoid Pima County ordinance violations, but is important for the health of equipment operators and that of our community. Please do your part to help **Keep Dust Down**.

### Please Contact Us to Save Taxpayer \$\$ or for More Info

- Save Taxpayer Money: Receive articles by e-mail**  
Send us your e-mail address for electronic distribution (saves time, paper, and postage)
- Schedule a free presentation**
- Request more information on health effects, regulations, control methods**
- Remove yourself from distribution list**



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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Check out our dust rule  
revisions link at  
[deq.pima.gov/Regulations/  
PublicReview.htm](http://deq.pima.gov/Regulations/PublicReview.htm)

## Airborne Dust is Particulate Matter Pollution

Particulate Matter is a major air pollutant in Pima County that is of great concern due to its serious health effects. Title 17 of the Pima County Code states that any permittee or person must take reasonable precautions to prevent excessive amounts of particulate matter from becoming airborne.

Construction activity is one source of airborne dust. Any type of earthmoving, hauling, and driving activity, as well as storage piles and unstabilized soil surfaces can contribute to unhealthy levels of particulates. Along with other sources, contractors, sub-contractors, developers, and construction workers need to take reasonable action to control airborne dust on their work sites and during activities in which they engage.

## Smoke School Training

### Arizona Smoke School, LLC

Fred Ellis 480-226-0945  
[www.arizonasmokeschool.com](http://www.arizonasmokeschool.com)

### ASU/ADEQ

[www.azdeq.gov/envirom/air/compliance/  
smoke.html](http://www.azdeq.gov/envirom/air/compliance/smoke.html) (480) 727-1322

### Carl Koontz Associates

[www.carlkoontzassociates.com/home.html](http://www.carlkoontzassociates.com/home.html)  
615-889-9494

## The Air Section is Moving Soon

We encourage you to set up a  
deferred account to obtain your  
Air Quality Activity Permits.  
Call 740-3340 for more info.

## How Does Airborne Dust Affect Human Health?

Children, the elderly, and people with respiratory or heart disease are most at risk from breathing airborne dust. Healthy people are at risk as well, especially outdoor workers and exercisers. It is estimated that about 200 people in the Metropolitan Tucson area will die this year from breathing particulates. Over 60,000 people throughout the U.S. are expected to die prematurely from this as well.

### Airborne dust can cause:

- Eye, nose, and throat irritations
- Reduced lung function
- Chest pain and heart attacks
- Increased hospitalizations
- Stroke
- Difficulty breathing
- Asthma attacks
- Weakened immune system
- Increased absences from work and school
- Premature death (by 1-8 years)

**Please, take reasonable precautions to Keep Dust Down!**