



Pima County Department of Environmental Quality
 150 W. Congress Street
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 www.deq.pima.gov

Got Dust? Keep it Down!

December 2005, Volume 2, 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 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.

“No Controls” is Not Reasonable

About one-third (15 of 44) of the airborne dust enforcement actions from January through September 2005 have involved “no controls” or “excessive dust.” Can you relate to any of these common reasons controls are not being used, or are not being used effectively?

- “Work started before we could get the water pull filled.”
- “We don’t really have that much earthwork left, so we sent the water truck to our other site.”
- “There are no water connections and the homebuilder didn’t provide us with any.”
- “It is really windy, and there is nothing we can do to keep the dust down.”
- “The water truck broke down.”

No matter what your reason, all persons are required under Title 17 of the Pima County Code to use reasonable precautions to keep particulates from becoming airborne from their operation or activity. Even on high wind days, you need to demonstrate that you have taken reasonable precautions to help keep dust down. Use of a daily log may be helpful in documenting your dust reduction activities, especially when PDEQ enforcement officers make an assessment of the reasonable precautions you took. The most basic reasonable and effective control methods include:

- Having water pull, stand tank, hydrant meter, or hose ready and in use before earthmoving work begins.
- Post a work site speed limit to advise everyone driving on site.
- Operating earthmoving equipment at lower speeds.
- Taking as much time as needed to keep dust down.
- Condensing work to a concentrated area when other controls are not available.
- Temporarily ceasing activity until control methods are in place and are effective.

This is your opportunity to help protect public health, employee health, and keep Pima County in compliance with national air quality regulations.

Five Days

Remember to Notify PDEQ within five working days of when you START **and** COMPLETE projects.

Call **243-4444** when you start activities. Fax completion form to **882-7709** after completion of a project. Find the form on-line at <http://www.deq.pima.gov/pdf/folder/CopleteNotice.pdf>.

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- 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**
- Provide feedback on newsletter**
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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Airborne Dust is Particulate Matter Pollution

Particulate Matter is a major air pollutant in Pima County that is of great concern due to the serious health effects, and the potential for being designated a *Non-Attainment* area for this criteria pollutant. A *Non-Attainment* status would result in more stringent regulations and higher fines for violations.

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. Contractors, sub-contractors, developers, and construction workers need to take reasonable action to control airborne dust on work sites.

FREE "Smoke School"

**March 2006
Kino Community Center,
Room 103**

Learn EPA Method 9 and how to
read opacity of dust plumes.

**Contact Fred Ellis
Arizona Department of
Environmental Quality
800.234.5677x4851
ellis.fred@ev.state.as.us
www.azdeq.gov/environ/air/
compliance/smoke.html**

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. Tens of thousands of 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!