

Outcome 6.3: AIR QUALITY

WORKING GROUP WHITE PAPER

Overview

Outcome 6.3: By 2050, we protect and enhance air quality as an essential resource for human health, economic development, natural environment, and quality of life.

The air quality working group has focused primarily on addressing ground-level ozone pollution as the key to meeting our goal of protecting the Metro area's air quality. However, many of the strategies that address ozone pollution also serve to address other forms of air pollution, such as particulate matter.

Accomplishments in the past two years:

- The Little Steps, Big Impact (LSBI) ground-level ozone campaign seeks to educate the public on ozone pollution and how individual members of the community can lessen their impact
- School ozone monitoring program utilizes hand-held ozone sensors, giving school children an opportunity to get hands-on experience with scientific instruments, while at the same time educating them on the principles of air quality science and improvement
- Through these programs, the MAPA area communities are becoming more aware of ozone pollution and learning tools to help improve the area's air quality
- Each year after the outreach campaign wraps up, an air quality awareness survey is conducted to measure the level of general air quality and LSBI-brand specific awareness. We have found that air quality awareness has improved throughout the course of our campaigns

Things to work towards in the next two years:

- Continue the Little Steps, Big Impact awareness campaign
- Partner with local schools and organizations such as Lauritzen Gardens to broaden outreach message
- Develop a draft Clean Air Action plan to ensure community partners continue to educate and plan for protecting air quality in the long term
- Continue to conduct air quality awareness surveys to measure our success for our outreach campaign. Additionally, our goal will be to complete and implement the Clean Air Action plan

Challenges and Priorities

Challenges the work group faces, and assistance that is needed:

- While MAPA has done an admirable job in obtaining funding for the LSBI outreach campaign, it often has difficulty obtaining local match for grant funds. Finding community organizations and businesses willing to participate in funding the effort would be beneficial.
- We have had difficulty getting participation from business and industry in the community. Area groups such as the Chamber of Commerce could be helpful in getting their members to take voluntary action to reduce ground-level ozone precursor pollutants.

Priorities for the next 5-10 years to accomplish the Heartland 2050 objective

Priorities	High	Med	Low
Develop and implement a Clean Air Action Plan (organizations include the City of Omaha, Douglas County Health Department, and MAPA)	X		
Find partners in the local business community to commit to voluntary ozone reduction efforts (Chamber of Commerce, other local business groups)		X	
Continue ozone education outreach efforts through the Little Steps, Big Impact campaign	X		