

## **Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District Environmental Justice Policies**

*State law defines environmental justice as “the fair treatment of people of all races, cultures, and incomes with respect to the development, adoption, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies”.*

**1. It shall be the SMAQMD’s policy to integrate environmental justice into all of our programs, policies, and regulations.**

As an organization, we will make environmental justice considerations a standard practice in the way we do business. Our programs are comprehensive and include adopting regulations, funding clean air projects through incentive programs, and conducting air monitoring, emissions assessments, employee training, enforcement, research, public outreach, and education. In each program area, we will keep an environmental justice perspective as we set priorities, assess the benefits and adverse impacts of our programs, policies, and regulations, and identify improvements.

**2. It shall be the SMAQMD’s policy to strive to improve our outreach and education efforts in all communities, especially low-income and minority communities, so that everyone can fully participate in our decision-making processes.**

We want to enhance the participation of the public in the SMAQMD decision-making processes. To accomplish this, we will seek to engage all District communities, make this information more accessible, educate communities on the public process used to make State and local air quality decisions, including the rulemaking and permitting processes, variance process, and the complaint process. In partnership with the State Air Resources Board (ARB), we will provide communities, including low-income and minority communities, the opportunity to participate in the decision-making processes by making information available and providing language services to facilitate understanding.

**3. It shall be the SMAQMD’s policy to work towards meeting health-based air quality standards and reduce health risks from toxic air pollutants in all communities, including low-income and minority communities, through the adoption of control measures and the promotion of pollution prevention programs.**

Preventing and reducing air pollution is the SMAQMD’s highest priority. In doing so, we are committed to achieving environmental justice. The public health framework of our efforts to reduce air pollution is the attainment of State and federal ambient air quality standards and reduction of health risks from toxic air pollutants. The framework includes a variety of measures that must be adopted at the local, State, and federal level.

**4. It shall be the SMAQMD’s policy to ensure that enforcement and permitting activities throughout the District are consistent and fair.**

The SMAQMD will continue to work to ensure compliance with all applicable air quality requirements for air pollution sources under SMAQMD’s jurisdiction. We want to assure that all complaints are promptly investigated and feedback is provided to the public on actions taken in response to those complaints. We will review our own enforcement activities and redirect efforts where we can achieve a more direct community benefit and will incorporate an environmental justice element into our enforcement training curriculum.

**5. It shall be the SMAQMD's policy to assess, consider, and reduce emissions, exposures, and health risks when developing and implementing our programs.**

While health risks occur from exposures to cumulative emissions from all sources, motor vehicles are the single, largest contributor on a district-wide basis. Current ARB and SMAQMD air quality programs—diesel risk reduction, ozone attainment, particulate matter attainment, zero- or low-emission motor vehicles, air toxics control measures, and consumer products—all help to improve the air quality and reduce cumulative health risks district-wide. Nevertheless, current state and federal air quality standards are still exceeded throughout the Sacramento region and there is a general consensus that the statewide health risk posed by toxic air pollutants remains too high. In addition, some communities experience higher exposures than others as a result of the cumulative impacts of air pollution from multiple sources—cars, trucks, trains, ships, off-road equipment, industrial and commercial facilities, paints, household products, and others.

We will continue to work to reduce emissions as needed to achieve and maintain State and federal air quality standards. For air toxics, we will continue to assess emissions and the toxic health risk risks associated with permitted sources. We will continue to conditionally grant permits to sources to limit toxic emissions and to deny permits to sources that exceed established toxic risk thresholds.

We must improve our ability to understand the cumulative public health impacts of air pollution by better assessing emissions, exposures, and health risks within communities. The State Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment and the ARB will help us define the health risks for potentially significant toxic air pollutants, and we will use that information to evaluate new ways to reduce risks within the scope of our authority. We will provide this information publicly in an easily understood way. As many of these activities are dependent upon data available at the State level, we will work very closely with the appropriate State agencies to prioritize and focus resources on those activities that will provide the greatest public health benefit

**6. It shall be the SMAQMD's policy to work with local land-use agencies, transportation agencies, and others to develop ways to assess and reduce cumulative emissions, exposures, and health risks from air pollution through general plans, discretionary project review, permitting, and other local actions.**

We recognize that local jurisdictions have a primary role in decisions affecting land use, community health, and welfare. Local land-use agencies and transportation agencies are directly responsible for the planning and siting of new air pollution sources, and SMAQMD also plays an important role by issuing permits for new sources of air pollution and reviewing and commenting on non-SMAQMD permitted land use and transportation projects. As such, we are committed to working as partners with these agencies and other stakeholders to use the technical tools and guidance available to consider the cumulative impacts of local sources of air pollution. Additionally, the SMAQMD also plays an important role when acting as a lead agency.