

CHAPTER 4

AIR QUALITY

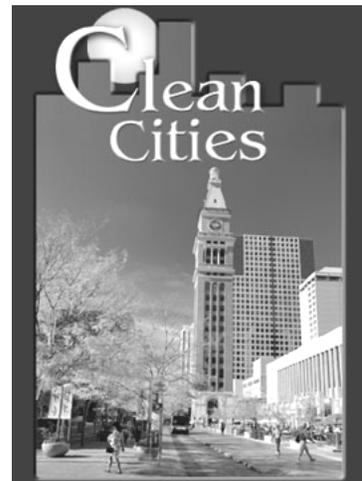
Introduction

The Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council (SMTC) area includes Onondaga County, which is currently designated by the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) as a “maintenance area” for carbon monoxide. Onondaga County will remain a maintenance area for twenty years, until the year 2013. Air quality regulations require an analysis to determine if planned improvements will continue to support the approved “maintenance plan” and the continued improvement of the quality of air in Onondaga County. This “conformity analysis,” performed by the SMTC with assistance from the New York State Department of Transportation’s (NYSDOT) Environmental Analysis Bureau (EAB), demonstrates the SMTC’s continued attainment status. The conformity test for the SMTC maintenance area demonstrates that the “build” emissions will be less than the base year emissions and that Transportation Control Measures (TCMs) are being implemented in a timely manner. The conformity determination/statement required for this 2001 Update is included later in this document. The SMTC’s role over the next several years will be to track information provided by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation’s (NYSDEC) air quality monitoring of pollutant levels and assist in the continued support for TCMs and other programs such as “Clean Cities” that help minimize the adverse impacts of transportation services on the environment.

Clean Communities of Central New York (CCCNY)

The CCCNY is essentially an outreach effort of the United States Department of Energy’s (USDOE) “Clean Cities” program to consolidate goals incorporated in the energy policy act, Executive Order 12844, and the Clean Air Act Amendments (CAAA). These federal directives commit the nation’s transportation sector to energy use that is more efficient, less dependent on foreign sources, less environmentally disruptive, sustainable and safe.

To that end, partnerships between local governments and industry representatives have been established to expand the use of alternative fuel. Initially, this meant local action to: (1) facilitate alternative fuel vehicle (AFV) production and conversion; (2) provide greater fuel choices; (3) expand the refueling infrastructure; and (4) support regulated fleets. Central New York phased into this arraignment on June 15, 1995 through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between a private/public coalition and the USDOE.



Since the signing date, the CCCNY developed the organizational capability to meet its commitment. The CCCNY retained an association manager (as required by the MOU) and began to expand the AFV infrastructure. Grants were obtained from the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) and the USDOE to build a multi-municipal fueling station and purchase fifteen AFV vehicles for use by the Onondaga County, the City of Syracuse, the Syracuse Housing Authority and the Syracuse City School District.

Of equal importance, the CCCNY simultaneously reached out to the community through a series of community briefings, stakeholder meetings, public appearances and joint ventures with the major



automobile manufacturers to showcase AFV products and at the same time give the CCCNY a higher profile. As the program matured, however, the program came to a public policy crossroads where energy initiatives, environmental regulation, public health concerns and economic opportunity fused into a single issue. As a result, the CCCNY became involved in helping the area sort out implications rising from the EPA rule revisions, technology advances in energy and transportation, utility deregulation and community consensus building for economic viability.

The CCCNY has assisted the Chamber of Commerce and Manufacturers Association of Central New York (MACNY) in analyzing the effect of the USEPA rule revisions for ozone and particulate matter. The CCCNY played a major role in helping Onondaga County Community College successfully obtain Congestion Mitigation Air Quality (CMAQ) funding to add an alternative fuel division to its advanced technology expansion plan and assisting the New York State Technical Extension Center (NYSTEC) at Rome, the Alternative Fuel Technology Center, in meeting its mission. The National Alternative Fuels Training Consortium has enlisted the aid of the CCCNY to expand the role of Onondaga Community College as a Regional Alternative Fuels (AF) Training Center.

The CCCNY continues to work to improve educational, technical and economic opportunities for Central New York. The CCCNY recently spearheaded the campaign to successfully designate Interstate 90 as an Interstate Clean Transportation Corridor. The NYSERDA, USDOE, the City of Syracuse and the Onondaga County Legislature have endorsed this proposal. The CCCNY recently met with City and County officials and with USDOE agency heads to develop a request to be designated under the "Rebuild America" program in order to receive assistance to retrofit public housing and school buildings to make them more energy efficient.

The CCCNY assisted the NYSDOT in its statewide Compressed Natural Gas refueling effort. At the request of the New York State Thruway Authority (NYSTA), the CCCNY provided assistance in the development of an AF refueling station at the Warners rest area. The CCCNY will be playing a substantial role in the development of projects for the State Enhancement Projects and Clean Cities Challenge involving such entities as the United States Postal Service, the City of Syracuse

and Onondaga County. The CCCNY, with the continued support of its “stakeholders,” will continue to develop improvements that benefit the economic vitality and quality of life in Central New York.

Central New York Regional Transportation Authority (CNYRTA)

The Central New York Regional Transportation Authority (CNYRTA) currently operates a fleet of



110 compressed natural gas (CNG) buses in regular route operations in Onondaga County. The CNYRTA has committed to a conversion of the remainder of its fleet to CNG over the next 12 to 15 years. When completed, the region will have expended \$32.5 million on the buses, as well as \$4.3 million to construct a CNG fueling station at CNYRTA’s Syracuse facility. This facility also contains a CNG fueling capability that is open to the public and to other fleet vehicles.