



# FAST FACTS

## AIR QUALITY

Studies showed no violations in national air quality standards are expected as a result of the Intercounty Connector (ICC). ICC air quality analyses show the highway will not cause, or contribute, to violations of the Clean Air Act (CAA) and associated National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS).

The ICC study team meticulously conducted local air quality analyses in strict accordance with U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the State Highway Administration (SHA) guidelines. EPA sets the standards to protect public health, especially with respect to sensitive populations such as asthmatics, children and the elderly.

► This assessment included a study of regional air quality conformity, such as existing and expected levels of carbon monoxide (CO), and an assessment of fine particle pollution (PM2.5) and of Mobile Source Air Toxics (MSATs).

● **Fine particle pollution (PM2.5 - otherwise known as Particulate Matter or PM)** – The ICC will meet all EPA air quality regulations for fine airborne particles (Particulate Matter 2.5 or PM 2.5).

● **Carbon monoxide (CO)** – Hot-spot analyses for carbon monoxide concluded that the ICC would not cause, or contribute, to violations of the carbon monoxide standard.

● **Toxic air pollutants** – Analyses of MSATs, which are toxic pollutants commonly associated with vehicle emissions, concluded that regional air quality will continue to improve due to advanced technologies, with or without the ICC.

► Air quality in the region is significantly better than it was in past years due to technological improvements, according to data collected on CO and PM 2.5 by the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCOC).

On November 8, 2007, a U.S. District Court firmly upheld the completeness of the ICC air quality work. Judge Alexander Williams ruled on all counts in favor of the FHWA, and against all allegations by the plaintiffs that the ICC Study had violated the Clean Air Act.

● The Court unambiguously rejected the plaintiff's charges that the Clean Air Act was violated, specifically the charge that the FHWA did not disclose significant health risks associated with air toxics.

● The Court found the FHWA's air quality methodology met every existing statutory and regulatory requirement, specifically rejecting the plaintiff's allegation that FHWA should consider the plaintiffs' approach to health effects analysis.

The Final Environmental Impact Study (FEIS), released in early 2006, may be viewed and downloaded at the ICC Project website at [www.iccproject.com](http://www.iccproject.com).

**For information, please call the ICC Project Hotline toll-free at: 866-462-0020**

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# A DETAILED GUIDE TO ICC AIR QUALITY AND STUDIES

## NEPA STUDIES

Air quality modeling was performed as part of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) studies. The studies included the analysis of carbon monoxide (CO), Fine Particulate Matter (PM<sub>2.5</sub>) and Mobile Source Air Toxics (MSAT).

### CO

- CO analysis was performed to determine CO concentrations at residences, schools, daycare centers and other locations where there are sensitive populations immediately adjacent to the ICC's right-of-way.
- Analyses demonstrated that CO impacts resulting from the ICC Selected Alternative will not result in a violation of the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) and conforms to the Clean Air Act.

### PM<sub>2.5</sub>

- PM<sub>2.5</sub> are particles and liquid droplets suspended in the air. Motor vehicles, i.e., cars, trucks and buses emit direct PM from their tailpipes, as well as from normal brake and tire wear. PM<sub>2.5</sub> refers to particles that are 2.5 micrometers in diameter or less.
- Qualitative PM<sub>2.5</sub> hot-spot analysis was conducted.
- PM<sub>2.5</sub> trends analysis for the Washington D.C./ Maryland/Virginia non-attainment area showed significant anticipated future decreases from direct on-road mobile sources through 2010 and thereafter.
- Hot-spot analysis found that the ICC project would not cause, or contribute, to a new violation of the PM<sub>2.5</sub> NAAQS, or increase the frequency or severity of an existing violation.

### MSAT

- Project-level MSAT analysis was performed for the ICC.
- For the MSAT analysis, total emissions were estimated for the six priority MSATs in the affected area of the ICC. The pollutants studied were: Benzene, Acrolein, Formaldehyde, 1,3-Butadiene, Acetaldehyde and diesel exhaust (diesel exhaust gases and diesel particulate matter).

- Analysis demonstrated that MSAT emissions in the design year (2030) would decrease greatly from current conditions. The amount of the decrease varies from 67 percent to 92.5 percent, depending on MSATs considered.

## Greenhouse Gases

Greenhouse gases were not modeled as part of the ICC environmental studies. The reason for this is addressed on page III-124 of the Record of Responses to Public Comments as follows: "FHWA does not believe it is informative at this point to consider greenhouse gas emissions as part of the project-level planning and development process. Greenhouse gases are quantitatively and qualitatively different from other motor vehicle emissions, and their magnitude and breadth appear to require a different approach to address their potential climate impacts."

- Criteria pollutant (CO, PM<sub>2.5</sub>) emissions are of concern, and thus regulated, in individual metropolitan or smaller areas. The climate impacts of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, on the other hand, are global in nature.
- Criteria pollutant emissions last in the atmosphere for perhaps months; CO<sub>2</sub> emissions remain in the atmosphere far longer - more than 100 years - and therefore require a much more sustained, intergenerational effort.
- Finally, due to the interactions between elements of the transportation system as a whole, project-level emissions analyses would be less informative than ones conducted at regional, state or national levels.

## ICC – REDUCING EMISSIONS DURING CONSTRUCTION!

- ▶ A Diesel Emission Reduction Plan is required for the ICC Project. Examples:
  - Using new construction vehicles and equipment, or retrofitting older ones with emission controls.
  - Limiting the idle times allowed for construction vehicles and equipment.