

# Monthly CAPCOG Air Quality Newsletter: March 2016

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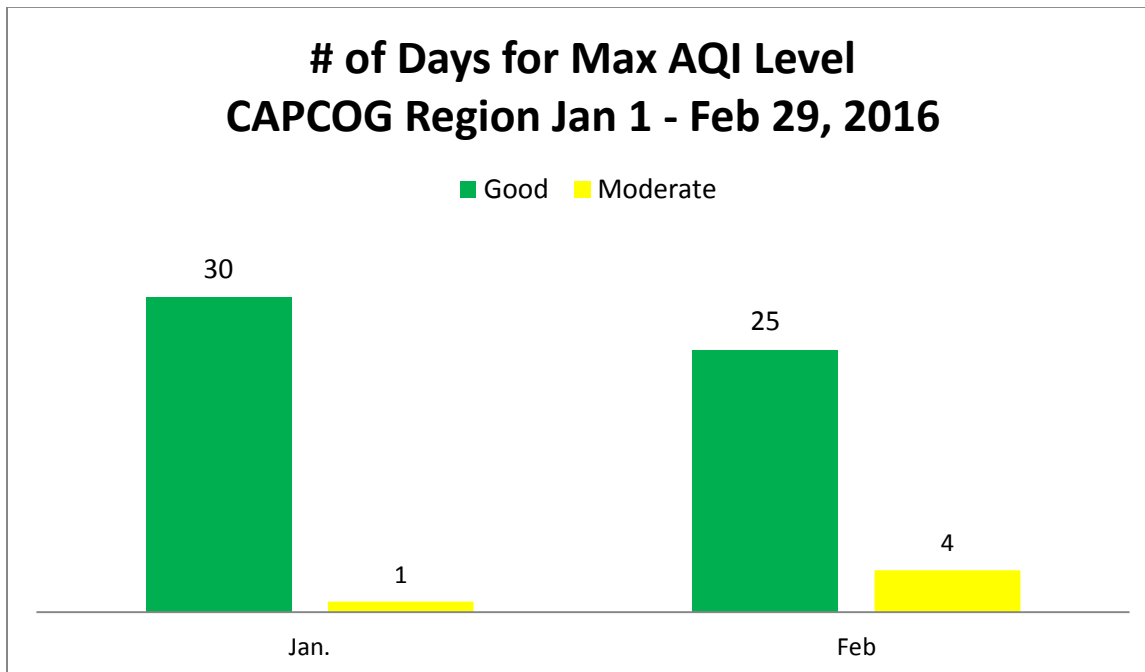
*Prepared by the Capital Area Council of Governments*

*March 1, 2016*

## Air Monitoring

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Figure 1. Air Quality Index (AQI) Summary for 2016 Year to Date



- “Moderate” Days in February:
  - Ozone: Feb. 11, 12, 27
  - PM<sub>2.5</sub>: Feb. 1
- Feb. Max 24-hour fine particulate matter (PM<sub>2.5</sub>) concentration: 14.9 µg/m<sup>3</sup> (42% of NAAQS)
- Feb. Max 8-hour ozone (O<sub>3</sub>) concentration: 64 ppb (91% of NAAQS)
- Feb. Max 1-hour nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) concentration: 49.6 ppb (50% of 1-hr NAAQS)
- Feb. Max 1-hour sulfur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>) concentration: 3.9 ppb (5% of NAAQS)
- All 8 of CAPCOG’s ozone monitors started collecting data by March 1

## State & Federal Updates

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- **EPA issued its designation guidance for the 2015 ozone NAAQS on Feb. 29, 2016;**
  - One major change from prior guidance: MSA/CSA is not the presumptive boundary for a nonattainment area any longer.
  - More info: <http://www.epa.gov/ozone-designations>.
- **EPA releases revised Ozone Advance Program Guidance on Feb. 25, 2016;**
  - Webinar scheduled for Thursday, March 17, 2016, from 2 pm – 3:30 pm EST;
  - Comments due to [advance@epa.gov](mailto:advance@epa.gov) by Friday, April 1, 2016;
- U.S. Supreme Court stays Clean Power Plan pending Judicial Review on Feb. 9, 2016:
  - U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit Scheduled to hear case June 2, 2016
  - EPA had expected NO<sub>x</sub> co-benefits from CPP in its 2025 ozone projections
- EPA proposed area designations for the 1-hour SO<sub>2</sub> standard on Feb. 17, 2016:
  - Nonattainment: 3 counties where large coal-fired plants are located (Big Brown, Monticello, and Martin Lake);
  - Remaining counties in Texas: either unclassifiable (such as Milam and McLennan counties) or unclassifiable/attainment (Robertson County);
  - Designations should be finalized by July 2, 2016;
  - Comments due by April 19, 2016
  - Status of these plants could have some small impacts on ozone in the Austin area
  - More Info: <https://www3.epa.gov/so2designations/regs.html>
- Inspection and Maintenance Program:
  - March 1, 2016 Marks the date when full implementation of single sticker program goes into effect for vehicle inspections/registration.
  - Starting on this date, motorists will have a 90-day window to complete both the inspection and registration.
  - For example, if registration expires in June, the motorist would have from beginning of April until the end of June to complete both;
- Drive a Clean Machine:
  - Applications are currently being accepted for Travis and Williamson Counties;
  - TCEQ is hosting an education workshop in Austin on March 4, 2016, for dismantlers that wish to begin participating in the Drive a Clean Machine (DACM) program. Info available at: <http://www.tceq.texas.gov/airquality/mobilesource/vim/dismantlers.html>
- TERP updates:
  - Emission Reduction Incentive Grants (ERIG) program application period closed on Feb. 2;
  - New Technology Implementation Grants Program application period closed Feb. 16;
  - Grant selections for Texas Clean Fleet Program (\$5.9 million) will be completed soon;
  - Grant application period for Clean Transportation Triangle (CTT) is open with \$5.9 million for alt. fuel infrastructure grants;
  - Natural Gas Vehicle Grant Program applications are being accepted;
  - More info: <http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/airquality/terp>.

## Other Updates

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- CAPCOG's emission reduction grant program solicitation posted/distributed on Feb. 16;
  - \$240,000 will be available for commuter emission reduction programs and emission reduction technology grants;
  - Minimum grant amounts of \$10,000 and maximum of \$50,000;
  - Applications due April 15, 2016;
- Clean Air Coalition Meeting Feb. 10, 2016:
  - Approval of updates to CAC by-laws;
  - Approved future meeting dates: June 8, 2016, August 10, 2016, and Nov. 9, 2016;
  - Joint meeting with AACOG's air quality committee scheduled for April 29, 2016, in San Marcos;
- Clean Air Coalition Advisory Committee:
  - Andrew Hoekzema stepped down as co-chair;
  - Phar Andrews from City of Austin will continue as chair and Caren Lee from Round Rock will come on as vice-chair;
  - Moving forward, meetings will be scheduled only in connection to a CAC meeting – approx. 4 weeks prior;
  - Updates will be made available through this newsletter;
  - Other work will be accomplished through work groups.