



Walter Wright, Jr.
wwright@mwlaw.com
(501) 688.8839

Office of Air Quality/Associate Director's Update: Demetria Kimbrough (Arkansas Department of Energy and Environment - Division of Environmental Quality) Arkansas Environmental Federation Air Seminar Presentation

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Ms. Demetria Kimbrough undertook a presentation at the May 9th Arkansas Environmental Federation Air Seminar.

The presentation was titled:

ON THE AIR WITH E&E

Ms. Kimbrough serves as the Associate Director of the Office of Air Quality of the Arkansas Department of Energy & Environment – Division of Environmental Quality.

The Office of Air Quality consists of four branches:

- Permits
- Compliance
- Policy and Planning
- Asbestos and Enforcement

A key focus of the Office of Air Quality is meeting Arkansas' federal obligations under the Clean Air Act.

Ms. Kimbrough's presentation included an overview addressing:

- Office of Air Quality management restructuring
- SEEK transition (i.e., the new data management system for Arkansas Energy & Environment)
- Regulatory and funding updates
- Final rules PM 2.5, MATS, Greenhouse gas emissions
- Grants CPRG, IRA/IIJA Air Monitoring Network Funding

The Office of Air Quality management was identified which includes:

- Deputy Associate Director Heath Cobb

- Senior Operations Manager Tom Rheume
- OAW Budget Liaison Karen Blue
- Compliance Manager Heinz Braun
- Policy Manager Erika Droke
- Asbestos Coordinator Ron Allen
- Enforcement Coordinator Heather Graham
- Air Lab Coordinator Robert Graddy

The Asbestos Branch was noted to be the first Office of Air Quality team to test SEEK. Advantages of the system were stated to include:

- Integrated account and documentation management for permitted sources
- Streamlined processing and account services

The presentation provided a regulatory update of the relevant rules and state implementation plans which identified:

- Rule/subject
- Affected sources
- Arkansas notes
- Plan going forward

Each of these categories were addressed on the slide for the following rules:

- EGU GHGs 111(d)
- Oil and Gas GHGs 111(d)
- EGU MATS
- PM 2.5 standard
- Ozone in Crittenden County

In terms of the final PM2.5 National Ambient Air Quality Standard the presentation noted that the United States Environmental Protection Agency (“EPA”) used 2020-2022 data to develop the rule and regulatory impact analysis. Further, designation letters are stated to be due to EPA February 7, 2025, using 2021-2023 data. 2023 data is stated to be not yet “final”. EPA final designations are stated to be February 6, 2026, using 2022-2024 data.

Updates were provided for the following additional issues:

- 2015 Ozone Transport – State Implementation Plan and Federal Implementation Plan
- Regional Haze Planning Period II State Implementation Plan
- Regional Haze Planning Period III

An update was also provided on funding/grants activity noting:

- Developed and submitted the Arkansas Energy and Environment Innovation Plan under CPRG Planning Funds March 2024
- Awarded 2 grants under IRA/IIJA funding to improve Arkansas’ monitoring network, update equipment, train staff, and automate AQ data processes

GO RED! (Reducing Emissions from Diesels) was addressed:

- Over 1 million in funding assistance distributed in 2023-2024
- This year’s program was open only one month before all funds allocated
- Changes coming to simplify the application process, set aside funds for specific air quality goals

A copy of the presentation can be downloaded [here](#).