



– Working together to deliver clean air efficiently and effectively –

For Immediate Release

DATE: Wednesday, July 19, 2006

CONTACT:	Sara O’Keefe	Christopher Dann	Renee Allen
	Comm. Manager	P.I. Officer	P.I. Manager
	RAQC	CDPHE	Envirotest
	(303) 629-5450	(303) 692-3281	(303) 456-7025

**Agencies Aim to Increase Remote Emissions Testing
Motorists encouraged to take part in existing programs while incentives are available**

Denver, Colo. – In an effort to streamline the process of emissions testing for metro-Denver area motorists, the Regional Air Quality Council (RAQC), Envirotest Systems, Inc., the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, and the Colorado Department of Revenue are partnering to increase the use of remote emissions testing and to encourage motorists to participate in two existing programs.

The RapidScreen and Repair Your Air Campaign both use approved roadside emissions testing equipment to measure tailpipe emissions as vehicles pass by official “RapidScreen” vans located on highway entrance ramps. At the same time, a photo of the passing vehicles’ license plate helps to match the emissions record with the motor vehicle record. The system then separates the data and some vehicles become eligible for RapidScreen and others for Repair Your Air – both of which aim to help the motoring public pass their mandatory emissions test in a much easier and cost-effective manner.

This summer, at the height of the Front Range region’s ozone pollution season, program partners will increase the number of RapidScreen remote sensing vans on the road in an attempt to screen additional vehicles. The passage of House Bill 1302 during the 2006 Colorado Legislative Session will also boost participation in such programs in the future by enhancing the current RapidScreen program and making mandatory a program similar to Repair Your Air, which screens for polluting vehicles.

RapidScreen is a program dedicated to simplifying emissions testing by allowing motorists to pass their emissions test without having to go to a stationary testing center. The RapidScreen vans utilize an infrared laser to measure tailpipe emissions on the fly. Data from the testing vans are collected and run through a screening process to find only the cleanest vehicles on the road. Once a vehicle measures two “clean” readings, the motorist receives notification that they have passed emissions when they receive their vehicle registration renewal.

– more –



– Working together to deliver clean air efficiently and effectively –

The program is designed to provide a more convenient option for those driving clean vehicles and reduce the wait time at the stations. “The program has been very successful, yielding an 80 percent response rate,” says Rodney Johnson, general manager of Envirotest’s Colorado program. “We look forward to providing roadside screening to more motorists as this program evolves.” In the coming months, Envirotest will add three new vans to the road and expand its coverage and hours of operation in order to screen additional vehicles.

Repair Your Air is another program that utilizes data collected from the RapidScreen vans. Managed by the RAQC, the lead air quality planning agency for the metro-Denver area, Repair Your Air uses the roadside technology to find and repair polluting vehicles at no cost to motorists. The RAQC identifies these vehicles and offers eligible motorists up to \$1,000 in emissions-related repairs. In addition, the motorist is offered the use of a free rental car for the duration of the repairs, providing extra incentive for citizens to get their vehicle fixed. The average cost of repairs is under \$500 and can be as simple as replacing an air filter or changing the oil. Vehicles typically take three to five days to repair and are able to pass an emissions test after completing the repairs. “The focus of this program is to repair as many vehicles as possible that emit excess pollution and help motorists with emissions problems pay for necessary repairs,” says Ken Lloyd, executive director of the RAQC. “In addition, the program is providing data on how to move forward with the full-scale implementation of a high-emitter based program.”

Participation in the RYAC program is easy and starts with two passes by the testing vans located on highway entrance ramps. Motorists will be contacted by a representative from the RAQC, which may take up to two months while the data is processed. Once the vehicle is identified, the motorist needs to set up an appointment for the free confirmatory emissions test. If the vehicle fails the test, the motorist is offered a free rental car while their vehicle is being repaired. The process ends with a passing emissions test, a healthy vehicle, and a clean conscience.

This year the Colorado Legislature passed House Bill 1302, mandating in part an increase in the use of the RapidScreen remote sensing devices in exempting those vehicles that meet the clean air criteria from having to obtain an emissions test at a station. In addition, the bill requires the development of a high-emitter program similar to the RYAC. While the current RYAC is voluntary and repairs are paid for through a federal transportation grant, the new program will be mandatory and repairs for emissions-related problems will be the responsibility of the motorist.



– Working together to deliver clean air efficiently and effectively –

Once implemented, the new program will require that vehicles identified on the road as high-emitters, and that fail a confirmatory emissions test, be repaired and then pass a subsequent confirmatory emissions test.

Full implementation is several years away; however, the current programs are providing the necessary data to provide a smooth transition. “The goal of these efforts is to make emissions testing more convenient and save motorists money,” says Margie Perkins, director of the Air Pollution Control Division for the State of Colorado.

Both RapidScreen and Repair Your Air are aimed at reducing emissions in the seven-county metro-Denver region while simplifying the testing process for citizens. While the region is in compliance with the new, stricter ozone standard set by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, it continues to flirt with the limit. It is imperative that the region maintains compliance with the standard through 2007 and beyond and programs such as RapidScreen, Repair Your Air, and the future high-emitter program are important in reaching that goal.

###