



U.S. Department of Transportation and the U.S. Environmental Protection
Agency
Transportation and Air Quality Public Information Initiative
"It All Adds Up to Cleaner Air"



Initiative Goal

To support and facilitate state and local governments' efforts to meet their congestion and air quality goals under the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) and the Clean Air Act (CAA).

Pilot Site Tests - Summary

Three communities were chosen to create a pilot program at the local level: Dover, Delaware; San Francisco, California; and Milwaukee, Wisconsin

The pilot sites were provided with technical assistance, print and broadcast creative materials, public relations tools, and funding to assist them in designing a customized approach to support the community's specific public involvement and informational needs in order to mitigate air quality and congestion concerns. Each of the sites collaborated with community groups, businesses, and environmental groups to implement and sustain the program within their own communities.

The pilot phase was intended as a learning experience to understand the strategies employed by community-based efforts to create change and support the effective implementation of the national roll-out.

While changing transportation-related *behaviors* would require sustaining an extensive public education effort for 1-4 years, an evaluation of the pilot site phase indicated that recall of key messages, programs and activities about the relationship between personal driving habits and local air quality increased markedly as a result of the three pilot site efforts. The pilot evaluation was designed to assess activities conducted at the community level, use of media messages, and the campaign's impact on the public, as well as to provide recommendations for the launch of the 1999 demonstration community phase.

Lessons Learned & Recommendations

The findings of the pilot phase provided valuable insight in continuing to develop a national initiative that meets the needs of a diverse array of communities, lays the foundation for a sustainable effort, and ultimately inspires the public to take action. However, budgetary and staffing limitations impact the selection and timing of changes made to the national initiative.

- **Maintain careful balance between national and local needs.** Although the initiative is ultimately working to achieve national change, communities need to feel a sense ownership, have a variety of options or approaches to select from, be able to customize campaign materials, and have the flexibility to pursue local priorities.
- **Engage in a strategic planning process for successful coalition development and expansion.**
- **Explore opportunities to share best practices throughout the campaign and encourage**

"community to community" problem solving.

- **Refine Demonstration Community selection process.** Selections should be based on problematic ozone non-attainment status, mid-size markets with sufficient resources and organizational capacity to conduct a community-based campaign.
- **Provide enhanced toolkit and training workshop early** so communities can start planning their campaigns before ozone season begins.
- **Provide more factual information regarding the impact of personal transportation choices.** In the pilot communities, there was significant interest in receiving messages and science-based facts that could be localized.
- **Further develop messages to provide the call-to-action for "high-awareness" communities.**
- **Distribute public service announcements (PSA) materials and provide background information on development and strategy early.**
- **Explore options to increase PSA placement.**
- **Examine options to obtain a combination of donated PSA air time as well as paid media to increase quality of coverage.**