



# **ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH STRATEGIC PLAN:**



**ARAQMD, SOLID WASTE,  
RIGHT-TO-KNOW**

**2014 -2017**



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3/19/14

## Introduction

This document is intended to define the mission, vision, and future direction of the Akron Regional Air Quality Management District (ARAQMD). ARAQMD has not had a formal strategic plan in the past, but with the recent merger with Summit County Public Health (SCPH) and accompanying changes in expectations for the organization, this plan has been developed to provide focus to ARAQMD and to facilitate attainment of its goals. For most of its history, ARAQMD has focused its work on what is required by contractual obligations and has viewed this as its primary vision. This plan represents a shift towards a future focus and will assist us to improve ourselves, breathing new life into our organization, fulfill our professional interests, and further the field of air quality.

According to The TCC Group's 2002 document, *Ten Keys to Successful Strategic Planning for Nonprofit and Foundation Leaders*, a strategic plan should provide guidance in fulfilling a mission with maximum efficiency and impact. It should articulate specific goals and define the steps to accomplish them. A strategic plan should be a living document that is reviewed and modified every three to five years to ensure that the organization is moving towards its goals. This strategic plan follows the model provided by the TCC Group and provides direction for ARAQMD, defines how to move in that direction, and identifies what the end result will be.

The remainder of this document is the mission, vision, and goals of ARAQMD. In order to keep the ARAQMD moving forward and facilitate continuous quality improvement, the strategies in this plan will be reviewed and revised annually with the Summit County Public Health (SCPH) annual strategic plan reviews.



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## **Mission Statement**

***The mission of the Akron Regional Air Quality Management District (ARAQMD) is to protect the public from the adverse health impacts of air pollutants and to educate the public about air quality issues.***

## **Vision Statement**

***ARAQMD will be a leader in the field of air quality by providing the public with timely and accurate updates about the quality of the air, education about air quality topics and working with researchers to identify sources of pollution, health effects of the pollution and how to either minimize or eliminate those sources to protect the air we breathe.***



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## Goals and Strategies

This document will describe a set of broad goals for the air quality unit, provide a justification for those goals, delineate a plan on how those goals will be achieved and provide an explanation of how attainment of the goals will be measured. Terms such as goal and strategy are used in many different ways. To clarify, for our purposes: *Goals* answer the question, “What do we hope to accomplish?” and they have measurable outcomes. Strategies answer the question “How will we accomplish our work?” and they are a set of activities that will be used to achieve the goals.

### **The goals identified are:**

Goal 1: Educate the Public on Air Quality Issues

Goal 2: Increase the Capacity of the Division

Goal 3: Be a Leader in the Field of Air Quality

Goal 4: Increase Office Efficiency



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## **Goal 1: Educate the Public About Air Quality Issues**

One of the primary ways that ARAQMD can influence public health is by educating the general public regarding air quality issues. For ARAQMD to fulfill this portion of its mission, it is critically important that our agency be seen as an authority and a resource regarding air quality to the general public, the regulated public, and the professional air quality community. To be seen as an authority and resource, the agency name must be known and associated with reliable, trustworthy information on air quality. ARAQMD must be connected to other public stakeholders in the air quality arena to increase awareness of our community's air quality issues and interest.

For most of the existence of ARAQMD, we did a great deal of our work behind the scenes as a regulator, and were scarcely known by the community at large. To impact the health of the general public, we must become higher profile as an agency. We must certainly maintain our focus on the regulated community, but also shift some attention to the public side of the air quality. We must get the attention of at risk populations to inform them of the impact of air quality on their health.

### **Goal 1 Strategies**

- **Increase public awareness of ARAQMD**
  - Generate database of potentially interested parties (addresses, phones, emails) in Summit/Medina/Portage Counties
    - Pulmonologists, pediatricians, schools and Parent/Teacher Associations, asthma doctors, regulated community, etc.
    - Newsletter list
    - Area Agency for the Aging
  - Maximize use of the website, Facebook and other media opportunities
  - Host events related to ARAQMD's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary on January 1, 2015 and Air Quality Awareness week



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- Increase membership of ARAQMD Advisory Board to include representatives of County Planning Commissions, Boards of Health and Fire Chiefs Associations
  
- **Host Public Meetings**
  - open burning
  - fugitive dust
  
- **Instituting the GO3 program at the APS STEM School**
  
- **Review and revise ARAQMD fact sheets for distribution**
  
- **Create informative videos for educational purposes to be put online which could be accessed for free by the public**



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## **Goal 2: Increase the Capacity of the Division**

ARAQMD has historically been a department unto itself. Since the merger with SCPH, that is changing. In an effort to better meet internal and community needs, SCPH leaders have reorganized the programs within Environmental Health and added additional functions.

To better integrate ARAQMD into the SCPH's Environmental Health Division (SCPH EH) and balance out the division of programs in SCPH EH, programs have been redistributed. The Right to Know and Solid Waste programs are being integrated into the EH -AQ division. The Right to Know program oversees the tracking of hazardous chemicals stored in the city of Akron and is performed in conjunction with the Akron Fire Department. The solid waste program enforces Ohio EPA rules and regulations regarding solid waste, infectious waste and construction and demolition debris disposal and is similar to the other regulatory programs that have historically been part of ARAQMD. As a result, Environmental Health Division - Air Quality has several programs new to the division that will be integrated with ARAQMD.

Also, as a way to expand the capabilities of SCPH and to follow our mission statement of protecting the public from the adverse health impacts of air pollution, ARAQMD is creating an HIA team to serve the ARAQMD region of Summit, Medina and Portage Counties. This team will identify issues the health impact of community development.

### **Goal 2 Strategies**

- **Develop a Health Impact Assessment (HIA) Program**
  - Assemble a team of SCPH staff to work on HIAs
  - Join and participate in local HIA teams to learn about HIA process
  - Partner with outside organizations to get access to planned projects
  - Follow the HIA process as described in the North American HIA Practice Standards Working Group's document "Minimum Elements and Practice Standards for Health Impact Assessment"



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- Work with Health Policy Institute of Ohio and other HIA organizations as needed to ensure that the recommendations are accurate and well thought out
  - Publish HIA results, report to the Board of Health
  - Track if HIA Program recommendations are used or useful to the organizations
  - Use data from recommendation tracking to ensure that the HIA Program is in tune with the organizations and, if needed, make adjustments to provide useful recommendations
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- **Integrate ARAQMD, Solid Waste and Right to Know programs into one subdivision of the Summit County Public Health Environmental Health Division**
    - Transfer Solid Waste (SW) and Right to Know (RtK) staff to AQ supervision group
    - Reconfigure RtK fees for City of Akron to cover costs of program
    - Expand RtK to Summit County
      - Work with Local Emergency Planning Commissions (LEPC), County Fire Chiefs Associations, elected officials and county council
    - Expand RtK to Medina/Portage Counties
      - Work with health departments, LEPCs, fire chiefs associations
    - Identify new revenue sources for SW



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## **Goal 3: Be a Leader in the Field of Air Quality**

The performance of the ARAQMD staff is exceptional, professional and the work product is comprehensive but this has not always been acknowledged outside of the organization. ARAQMD would like to be acknowledged in the field of air quality as experts and, with that, comes the responsibility to share the experience and expertise with others. ARAQMD will institute projects that generate interest and gain recognition for the agency as a leader in the field of air quality from peers, the regulated community and the public.

### **Goal 3 Strategies**

- **Initiate the GO3 program**
  - With APS STEM school, becoming the 1<sup>st</sup> school in Ohio
- **Create a model ambient air shelter for use by both ARAQMD and APS at the STEM school**
- **Develop air quality data analysis projects for publication in journals**
  - Work with students from local colleges
- **Identify links between air quality and health**
  - Work with researchers and other entities
- **Generate research quality data for use by collaborative agencies or educational institutions**
  - Update monitoring network



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- **Assist in developing or revising OEPA's guidance documents, EAC forms, templates or other documents**
  - Volunteer for the OEPAs Permitting and Enforcement (P&E) Committee
  
- **Take leadership roles in organizations**
  - Including but not limited to:
    - OEPA Technical Services Officers (TSO)
    - OEPA Permitting and Enforcement Committee (P&E)
    - Ohio Environmental Health Association (OEHA)
    - Ohio Local Air Pollution Control Agency Officers Association (OLAPCOA)
    - National Association of Clean Air Agencies (NACAA)
    - Local boards or panels such as Omnova's Community Advisory Panel or ReWorks Board of Trustees,
    - Akron Metropolitan Area Transit Study (AMATS) Technical Advisory Committee
    - Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency's (NOACA) Air Quality Advisory Committee



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## **Goal 4: Increase Office Efficiency**

As the demands on ARAQMD increase and the capacity of the EH-AQ division are expanded, efficiency in the operations of the department is becoming more important. ARAQMD will focus on improving how we do our work to ensure the highest production and quality of work.

### **Goal 4 Strategies**

- **Develop Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)**
  - Identify tasks where there is a need for improved consistency
  - Prioritize the list and assign the generation of the SOPs to staff or groups of staff
  - Archive the SOPs in a useful manner for access by all ARAQMD staff
  - Review and revise SOPs annually
  
- **Institute a paperless office**
  - Generate a filing protocol
  - Identify final storage for documents
  - Arrange for electronic document submittal from the public
  - Scan documents and dispose of them afterwards
  - Follow records retention policy
  - File scanned documents according to protocol
  
- **Generate a staff development plan**



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- Using the SOPs generated, cross train the staff to understand other positions in ARAQMD, have backup staff in case of illness or training for supervisory/coordinator positions
  - Provide opportunities for staff to attend applicable conferences, courses or workshops when and where they are offered
  - Have staff report back to the group what they learned from the event during an AQ staff meeting or in an email to the staff
  - Encourage staff to join and participate on local, state and nationwide committees or organizations to meet others who perform similar work duties.
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- **Institute a non-High Priority Facility Inspection Route**
    - Identify the non-HPFs to be inspected for each year
    - Create inspection schedules and assign pursuant to staff workload
    - Track inspections through STARS2
    - Identify facilities operating in violation of OAC rule 3745-31-02 (A) which addresses the list of expired and/or extended operating permits from STARS2, new and existing companies that never applied for a permit to install
    - Address unresolved Notices of Violation and Enforcement Action Requests
    - Identify one individual who will be the point of contact for all enforcement cases and track the NOV and EARs to ensure their timely disposition as part of OEPAs Compliance Assistance Through Enforcement Protocol (CATEP)



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## Evaluation of Goals

Goals will be measured initially by attainment, rather than by effects or outcomes of those goals.

### **Goal 1: Educate the Public about Air Quality Issues**

**Measure:** Did events occur? Did website get renovated? Did website traffic increase? Did expansion of lists happen? Were documents reviewed and/or revised?

### **Goal 2: Increase the Capacity of the Environmental Health Division- Air Quality**

**Measure:** Did HIA team get organized? Did connections with outside entities occur? Were HIAs conducted with SCPH as leaders?

**Measure:** Did AQ/SW/RtK programs come under direction of EH Assistant Director/Administrator of ARAQMD? Did RtK expand its jurisdictional boundaries?

### **Goal 3: Be a Leader in the Field of Air Quality**

**Measure:** Have new projects been started?

### **Goal 4: Increase Office Efficiency**

**Measure:** Have the SOPs been created? Is the office paperless by 1/1/16? Was a staff development plan formed? Did the number of non-HPF inspections increase from 2013? Was STARS2 accurately updated with new information?