State of Utah

Department of
Environmental Quality

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NEWS RELEASE
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2011-2012 Ozone Study Findings Released, More Work to Be Done

WHO: Utah Division of Air Quality scientists, researchers, community and industry leaders Uintah County Commission, Bingham Research Center, Western Energy Alliance, Tricounty Health Department, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and others.

WHAT: Utah Department of Environmental Quality is leading a multi-phase study of ozone formation in the Uintah Basin. Scientists, officials, and partner organizations involved in the study will be on hand for a press conference and availability session to release and discuss the 2011-2012 study and findings and outline the current 2012-2013 study.

WHEN: Tuesday, February 19, 2:00-2:30 PM press conference, 2:30-3:00 PM availability session.

WHERE: Bingham Research Center, 320 N. Aggie Boulevard, Vernal Utah. A call in number will be available upon request.

WHY: During some winters the Uintah Basin experiences episodes of elevated surface ozone. The Basin had no episodes of high ozone in 2012 and has had 15 in 2013. These episodes are unique because they occur during winter months in rural areas, two conditions not usually associated with ozone formation. High concentrations of ozone that exceed the health-based National Ambient Air Quality Standard can impact human health and damage crops, trees, and other vegetation.

To identify the causes, DAQ, EPA, BLM, NOAA, Western Energy Alliance and Uintah Impact Mitigation Special Service District have pooled funding and resources to study the chemistry and meteorological conditions that lead to high ozone in the Basin. Lack of snow cover and inversion conditions in the winter of 2011-2012 did not provide the data needed to understand the chemistry that leads to high ozone. This winter's meteorological conditions in the Basin are more favorable for ozone formation and work is under way to gather remaining data. The final report

from the 2011-2012 Study will be available, in addition to the study plan for 2012-2013, at http://www.deq.utah.gov/locations/uintahbasin/index.htm.

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