

**COBB COUNTY GOVERNMENT
SUMMARY OF
RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF
PARTNERSHIP FOR A SMOG-FREE GEORGIA**

Formerly known as the Voluntary Ozone Action Program

March 1999

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Introduction

The Partnership for a Smog-Free Georgia (PSG), *formerly known as the Voluntary Ozone Action Program (VOAP)* is a voluntary program managed by the Georgia Environmental Protection Division (EPD) of the Georgia Department of Natural Resources (DNR). The PSG Program was introduced in 1998 and had two primary focuses. One was to educate Georgia citizens about the effects of ground-level ozone. The second was to promote simple but effective voluntary actions that employees and employers could take to reduce ozone-causing emissions on days when high concentrations of ozone were anticipated.

Under the PSG program, EPD obtained commitments from public and private employers, as well as other organizations to make operational and behavioral changes on "Ozone Action Days" during the ozone season, May 1 through September 30. Through partnership agreements, the program attempted to reduce emissions in two ways (1) reducing or shifting demand for commuter trips and (2) reducing or eliminating emissions through adjustments in operational and maintenance activities. The combined actions of metro area employers were anticipated to have a measurable impact on ground-level ozone.

Since program inception, EPD has learned that air quality issues facing metropolitan Atlanta are anticipated to ultimately affect the entire State of Georgia. Furthermore, harmful emissions released into the atmosphere include particulate matter (pm) as well as other pollutants. For these and other reasons, EPD recently renamed the program, Partnership for a Smog-Free Georgia, in an attempt to more accurately capture and reflect the broader scope of the problem within the program name. For 1999, the State's PSG Program will have many of the same goals but a broader scope and a slightly different focus. Details are forthcoming.

The Cobb County Board of Commissioners recognized the need to partner with EPD and join other metropolitan Atlanta businesses and Government agencies in the effort to improve the region's air quality. On September 8th, 1998, the Cobb County Board of Commissioners (BOC) elected to become an active participant in the PSG Program for 1999.

The Board authorized the Cobb Department of Transportation to be the lead Agency in developing a plan for Cobb County government agencies and employees to help reduce ground-level ozone and other pollutants in the Atlanta region. In coordination with Agencies under the supervision of the County Manager, the Department of Transportation has developed the Cobb County Government PSG Plan for initial consideration by the Board.

7. Standardized signs will be produced by DOT to be placed along the roadway network in Cobb County.
8. Notices will be placed on the Marquee at the Civic Center, Jim Miller Park, DOT traffic channel and variable message signs.

Goal 3 – To publicize and promote the County’s PSG Program and its efforts towards achieving better air quality for the region.

Actions:

1. An initial letter announcing the establishment and implementation of the County PSG program will be sent to each employee. The letter will be signed by a high level County Official in order to demonstrate the level of support and commitment.
2. A series of articles will be published in the Employee Newsletter highlighting various issues, and air quality related information.
3. Fact sheets with promotional and educational information will be developed for inclusion in employee paychecks, at least three times between May 1 and September 30, 1999.
4. A brochure containing complete information on the Cobb County PSG Program will be developed and distributed. The brochures will be produced in sufficient quantities for distribution to interested County employees, other agencies and the general public.
5. An orientation and awareness program targeted towards the general public for presentation on Channel 23 will be developed.
6. A name and logo unique to the Cobb County PSG Program will be developed.
7. The outside of the Employee Shuttle will be used to promote Cobb County’s participation in the PSG Program.

Goal 4 – To recognize and reward County employees for participation in the County PSG and for their individual efforts towards achieving better air quality for the region.

Actions:

1. Preferential parking will be provided at County facilities for individuals who carpool or vanpool to work.
2. Employees will be recognized in the Employee Newsletter for any outstanding effort towards program goals.
3. Agencies will develop an internal method of recognizing employees for program participation and outstanding effort towards program goals.

Goal 5 – To continue to replace County gasoline and diesel vehicles with clean fuel vehicles at a rate higher than the federal requirements.

Actions:

1. Develop an inventory of vehicles that could be replaced with clean fuel vehicles.

provided a free ride home by taxi or rental car if the distance is too far. A voucher system is used for reimbursement.

Each participating County work location will designate a person to be responsible for the vouchers. In most cases the Personnel representative for each work location will be designated to dispense the vouchers to eligible users. The overall County GRH program will be housed in the Personnel Office. ARC requests each participating business to sign an agreement to manage the program and assign a GRH Administrator to distribute the vouchers responsibly. Materials on the program will also be distributed at New Employee Orientation and listed along with other Employee Benefits.

Cobb County government will join the Town Center Transportation Management Association and Cumberland Transportation Network in participating in the GRH program in Cobb County.

Preferential Parking Preferential parking will be provided where possible at work locations to encourage ridesharing and vanpooling.

Public Transportation Subsidized transit on CCT will be provided to County employees to encourage employees to use public transportation for their commute to work and to make trips during the workday. Cobb Community Transit, Cobb DOT, will manage this program. *(Proposal currently under study).*

Bicycle and Pedestrian Programs The County will develop a "Bikes on Buses" pilot program to encourage individuals to bike to work as an alternative to driving. Bike racks will also be installed at Marietta Square, CCT Transit Center and other appropriate locations. Bicycle and pedestrian safety programs will also be sponsored by the County.

Worksite Strategies Agencies will provide a variety of activities during the day to discourage SOV travel. These may include "Lunch and Learn" programs, working lunches, coordinating lunch deliveries to the work site and providing listings of eating establishments within walking distance of the work location and those that deliver.

Incentives A package of incentives will be recommended for employees that participate in ridesharing, vanpooling or commute to work in other than a SOV. In addition to preferential parking, employees may receive certificates, buttons, Cobb County shirts, and other small tokens for participation.

Marketing and Promotions

In order to be successful, the PSG Program will be promoted to employees in a variety of ways. The program will be introduced to employees by a personal letter from a high-level government official emphasizing official endorsement and describing the program. News articles will be written for publication in the employee newsletter, brochures will be