AQMD Monitoring PM10 in Duarte to Gather Data on Harmful Dust Emissions from Vulcan Mining

A PM10 monitoring station is up and running on the grounds of Royal Oaks School, installed by the South Coast Air Quality Monitoring District (AQMD) in response to Duarte City Council and community concerns about current and potentially increasing harmful microscopic dust emissions emanating from Vulcan Materials Co., adjacent to the City.

The monitoring system samples dust particulates of less than 10 microns such as those emitted from rock mining and related operations at the Vulcan mining site. It also measures wind direction to help determine the source of the PM 10. Children and people with lung problems are especially at risk from breathing the fine particles of dust.

Samples from the monitoring station are collected on a set schedule every six days, consistent with the collection schedule from other AQMD PM 10 monitoring stations located in the San Gabriel Valley. Results of summary statistics including monthly averages, quarterly averages, and maximum concentration are then analyzed and compared with day-for-day data to help put the findings into context. The first quarterly statistics from the monitoring site will be available to the City and its residents sometime in January 2006.

Royal Oaks School at 2499 Royal Oaks Dr. was selected for the monitoring station based on weather patterns and air flow. The site provides an open plain area of the city where potential emissions can be measured as they flow from the northeast at Vulcan down into the City of Duarte. The South Coast Air Basin, a four-county area that includes Orange, the non-desert portions of Los Angeles and San Bernardino County and most of Riverside County, is classified as a serious non-attainment area for PM 10. Aggregate and cement operations, such as those conducted by Vulcan, have been identified as sources of PM10 emissions, that have been mandated to be brought into compliance with Federal standards by 2006.

The Vulcan plan to expand mining operations has also spawned the formation of Citizens United to Save Van Tassel Ridge (CUTSVTR), a grass roots organization of Azusa and Duarte residents and others, who are working to generate public and governmental opposition to the plan. The group is planning a public meeting in Azusa to be held at the end of Sept. Two weeks later another public meeting will be held in Duarte. Meeting details will be posted on the group's web site at www.savevantassel.com. Information is also available by calling Ryan Nevins at (626) 716-0459.

Duarte residents who would like to be kept up-to-date on the status of Vulcan's proposed expansion plan, may contact Karen Herrera, assistant to the Duarte City Manager at (626) 357-7931. or e-mail her at herrerakaren@aceessduarte.com to be added to an e-mail advisory list. The City is also developing a special web site link on the City web site, www.accessduarte.com, to help keep the community up to date on the issue. It is expected to go online by this fall.

For those who would like to take a more active role, Azusa City Council meetings are held the first and third Mondays at 7 p.m. at Azusa City Hall, 213 E. Foothill Blvd. Azusa Assistant City Manager, Robert Person, can be contacted by e-mail at: rperson@ci.azusa.ca.us.