Air Advisory Issued for Twin Cities/Rochester, Southern Minnesota

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: 12/18/2007
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The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) has issued an Air Pollution Health Advisory through Friday due to elevated levels of fine airborne particulates for most of Minnesota, with the worst air quality occurring in the Twin Cities and Rochester. Stagnant winds overnight are helping trap fine particles and allowing them to build. These conditions are expected to continue until Friday, resulting in marginal air quality. The Air Quality Index (AQI) hit 103 in Rochester this morning. The Twin Cities AQI is 92 this morning and may climb near 100.

The north and northwest part of the state will have fair air quality but the southern two-thirds of Minnesota including Brainerd, Duluth and St. Cloud and southward will experience marginal air quality that may reach peak AQI readings near 90 over the next several days.

AQI levels in the 90s are near the threshold that is unhealthy for sensitive groups with respiratory, cardiovascular and heart conditions, as well as senior citizens, children and physically active adults. Fine particle pollution can occur at any time of the year and is a result of fossil fuel combustion from electricity generation, transportation and wood smoke.

Sensitive groups should avoid vigorous or prolonged exercise outdoors and indoors. Others, including athletes and other healthy adults should consider reducing or postponing heavy exertion (play shorter games, walk instead of run, rotate players more frequently, etc.).

PLEASE HELP REDUCE AIR POLLUTION DURING THIS ALERT:

- reduce driving and idling
- postpone fires to reduce wood smoke
- postpone use of small engines
- reduce electricity usage

To learn more or to check hourly updates of the AQI, visit: http://aqi.pca.state.mn.us/

For additional information on reducing air pollution, visit Clean Air Minnesota (CAM) at: http://www.mn-ei.org/air/resources.html#FactSheets
proteus