

What is CenSARA?

ORGANIZATION AND MEMBERSHIP

Central States Air Resource Agencies Association was formed on the 13th of July, 1995, by a collaborative effort of the air quality program directors of the eight states that comprise the central area of the United States (i.e. Arkansas, Iowa, Kansas, Louisiana, Missouri, Nebraska, Oklahoma and Texas).

CenSARA was formed as a non-profit corporation for the benefit of the membership. It is governed by the officers and the board of directors consisting of the air directors of the states and elected representatives from the local programs of each EPA region which has local agencies.

The by-laws of CenSARA require that there be at least one general membership meeting per year, and that the officers and the director meet at least four times per year. These meetings are held to provide oversight and input into the associations activities as well as to provide management of the annual program for the organization.

The association currently represents the founding states. In addition, the state of Minnesota has joined the association. CenSARA also represents the local agencies in our service area, these include: City of Houston, Texas, Galveston County Health District, Galveston, TX, City of Dallas, Texas, City of Fort Worth, Texas, El Paso City-County Health & Environmental District, El Paso, Texas, Johnson County Environmental Department, Lenexa, KS, Linn County Health Department, Cedar Rapids, IA, Polk County Public Works, Des Moines, IA, Wyandotte County Health Dept, Kansas City, KS, Topeka-Shawnee County Health Dept, Topeka, KS, Wichita-Sedgwick County Department of Community Health, Wichita, KS, St. Louis County Air pollution Control Division, Clayton, MO, City of Kansas City, Springfield-Greene County Health Dept, Springfield, MO, City of St. Louis, MO, Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Dept, Lincoln, NE, City of Omaha, NE.

These agencies are federally funded and comprise the lead agency for air pollution control in their area and as such are responsible for the air policy and programs. The Work Plan described below reflects these purposes and the mission of the Central States Air Resource Agencies Association as outlined in our By-laws.

HIGHLIGHTS

When CenSARA was formed in 1995, it was staffed by voluntary efforts of the member agencies. During the first few months the activities and accomplishments were limited to those that could be done in a cooperative mode. The Directors upon completion of the incorporation and the acquisition of funding decided in 1996 to set up an office with permanent staff. Prior to the office being established, several organizational meetings were held along with the first workshop on Confined Animal Feeding Operations.

The CenSARA office was officially opened on November 1, 1997. At that time work began on setting up the working committee structures, development of policies and procedures and the acquisition of the necessary equipment and furnishings to allow the office to function properly. Since the establishment of the office, many projects have been accomplished, including a series of workshops on the monitoring of PM 2.5, Advanced NSR, the national seminar on training and downlink site coordination, along with several CARB courses. We have also sponsored meetings for our membership to discuss such issues as regional cooperation, EPA's Nox SIP call and various other issues.

CenSARA is committed to providing our membership with the best training opportunities at the lowest cost possible. We have collaborated on several occasions with other multi state organizations to make training courses available to our members and other interested parties.

MISSION AND OBJECTIVES

CenSARA's mission

The mission, which CenSARA was formed to accomplish, is to promote the exchange of information between our states and other interested parties related to the control of air pollution. These actions are to be accomplished within the scope of the air quality statutes and regulations. We are chartered to act as a forum to discuss air quality issues of common concern to the central states and to help identify options that can effectively resolve these issues; to recommend courses of action to our members; to adopt resolutions of policy statements for consideration and implementation by the membership or for their usage during the development of local, state and federal programs, regulations and laws. We are to advance the interests and stature of the association; to assure that the organization is financially viable; to fulfill the requirements of the CenSARA/EPA; to develop activities that will serve as an effective forum for the sharing of ideas and information on State and Local program issues and to coordinate policy and technical issues with the membership, the US Environmental Protection Agency as well as other Agencies on the State and Federal level and interested parties.

The Objectives Are As Follows:

- Continue the operations of the CenSARA office.
- Project a strong, unified regional voice among agencies in the central tier of states on air quality policy; program excellence, activities, and progress through the use of self help toward excellence. To promote discussion of technical issues and concerns by promoting a cooperative working relationship among the member agencies, various EPA offices other regional associations, states, locals and other interested parties.
- Provided for a focal point by which information is received and disseminated from government and industry at all levels to our membership.
- To provide a conduit by which the membership can share information on current air quality policy, program requirements, activities, technical issues/concerns, emerging issues and future needs. When necessary for the common benefit of the region or multiple members of the association, enter into contractual arrangements for special projects, which address the identified goals of the association.
- Provide a forum for the senior managers of the member agencies to meet and discuss items of common interest and to interface with their counterparts in EPA and other states.
- To provide opportunities for the technical staff of the member states and locals to meet and discuss issues of a technical nature and to discuss solutions to problems in their specific areas of expertise. To allow for interchange of information from the various levels and branches of government.
- To facilitate the use of technical committees to develop expertise in the staff of the various agencies. To coordinate the necessary interchanges (conference calls, meeting, and forums) to accomplish the goals of the committee chairs.
- To develop position papers for the use of the membership on issues of regional concern. Work with the membership to come to consensus on issues of national or regional importance to enable the association to speak with unified voice.
- To use all available avenues to stay updated on new and developing issues which have the possibility of impacting the membership. To distribute in a timely fashion to the membership updates or emerging information on issues of concern.

WORK PLAN ELEMENTS

Every attempt will be made to balance the resources of the association between the work elements as outlined.

Administrative

The administrative tasks inclusive of the ongoing operation of the office, management of personnel and administrative policy issues; budget preparation and tracking; financial management of the association's

funds, grants administration and objective reporting; purchase and oversight of CenSARA office equipment and property; coordination among the membership; organize and conduct business meetings and coordination with the various EPA offices.

Training And Conferences

It is the goal of CenSARA to provide for the training requirements of our membership. We will accomplish this task through the use of training provided by established training providers such as APTI or the training centers. This will be augmented by special training endeavors on specific topics of general interest to the members. Training for the membership was and continues to be a major focus of the association.

As stated above we are committed to providing training opportunities for our membership at the lowest possible cost and in the closest proximity possible. To this end we will endeavor to provide quality training in our area of coverage by utilizing existing courses and providers, co-sponsoring courses and providing for courses which are not otherwise available. Our plans call for two major training activities each year, to be held during the Spring and Fall of the year. Along with these two major courses we will participate in as many conferences as possible and will actively seek to co-sponsor where it is feasible. We will work with the State and Local agencies to provide them with those contacts which will allow them to avail themselves of the training opportunities which are available to them today.