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News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

1999 Marks a Year Free of Carbon Monoxide Exceedances

(Las Vegas, Nev. – January 6, 2000) – The Las Vegas Valley made it through 1999 without exceeding the Environmental Protection Agency’s (EPA) standard for carbon monoxide for the first time since the Clark County Health District began monitoring for the pollutant in 1971.

Michael Naylor, head of the Health District’s Air Pollution Control Division (APCD), credits the exceedance-free year to a couple of different factors. Naylor states, “This year the Board of Health mandated the use of a cleaner burning gasoline (CBG) during the months of November through March, this is in addition to the oxygenated fuel that is dispensed in the valley October through March. We are estimating that the use of this fuel will reduce emissions by 9.6 percent.” Naylor further explains that the Las Vegas area has experienced relatively few inversion layers, the phenomenon that occurs when cooler, heavier air is trapped beneath lighter, warmer air, allowing carbon monoxide emissions to become increasingly concentrated.

Within, a two-year period, only one exceedance per year is allowed for carbon monoxide. If the Valley has no more than one exceedance during the year 2000, Clark

(more)

County will have reached attainment of EPA standards for carbon monoxide. During the past several years carbon monoxide levels have steadily decreased, and only one monitoring station has remained out of compliance, with two exceedances in 1998 and one in 1997.

Carbon monoxide is a colorless, odorless gas that impairs the ability of the blood to carry oxygen in the body. At high levels it can cause headaches and dizziness. Infants, the elderly and people with respiratory ailments or heart problems are particularly sensitive to the effects of this pollutant. In Southern Nevada 84 percent of carbon monoxide emissions come from motor vehicles, 12 percent from non-road mobile sources such as airports, 2.3 percent from area sources such as wood burning and the balance from stationary sources such as electrical generating facilities.

For up to date information on carbon monoxide and other monitored pollutants call APCD's Air Quality Index hotline at 385-4613.

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