

## **OHIO COASTAL MANAGEMENT PROGRAM ISSUE AREA: ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY**

### Uses Subject to Management

- Activities involving any process, system or practice that may be a source of air pollution.
- Activities involving the storage, handling, disposal, and transportation of toxic substances and hazardous wastes.
- Activities involving the cleanup of unregulated hazardous waste disposal sites.
- Activities involving the handling and disposal of marine sanitary wastes.
- Activities affecting the visual and aesthetic quality of the shoreline, including unsanitary dumping and unsightly littering in Lake Erie and its tributaries or along its banks, and in embayments, tributaries, and back waters.

### Air

Ohio's lakeshore counties contain many of the state's largest industrial complexes, including coal-fired electric generating facilities with 17 percent of the statewide coal-fired generating capacity. In the past 10 years, emissions from the numerous air pollution facilities have decreased substantially. However, unacceptable air quality conditions remain in the industrialized regions of Lucas, Lake, Lorain, and Cuyahoga Counties, and to a lesser degree, in Ashtabula County (see Table 3 below).

Because of poor air quality nationwide, Congress passed the Clean Air Act (CAA) in 1967, strengthening it considerably in 1970, 1977 and 1990. These amendments broadened the federal role in setting standards for air quality, directing state efforts to meet the standards and providing for enforcement of plans when a state fails to do so.

The U.S. EPA has established primary National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) sufficient to protect public health and secondary NAAQS to protect against damages to property, vegetation, crops and animals. The CAA required states to develop State Implementation Plans (SIPs) that would result in attainment of the standards for six primary air pollutants. Current SIPs focus primarily upon the pollutant standards with which certain areas in Ohio have not achieved compliance. Additional work is also necessary in Cuyahoga County to address the 1987 revision to the particulate standard to emphasize particulate matter of 10 microns or less (PM<sub>10</sub>); the Cuyahoga County particulate SIP is being revised accordingly. Table 3 indicates the nonattainment status for the pollutants for which several coastal counties in Ohio have not achieved compliance.

TABLE 3

Ohio Counties of the Lake Erie Coastal Area  
Designated Nonattainment  
for the National Ambient Air Quality Standards

	PM <sup>10</sup>	OZONE	SULFUR DIOXIDE primary
LUCAS			X
WOOD*			
OTTAWA*			
SANDUSKY*			
ERIE*			
LORAIN*			
CUYAHOGA			X
LAKE*			
ASHTABULA*			

NOTE: Although this table reflects the entire county as designated nonattainment, the actual nonattainment designations refer to specific areas within each county. Actual boundaries can be found in the Code of Federal Regulations (40 C.F.R. § 81.336).

\* Attainment for all criteria pollutants.

These matters are of concern to Ohio's Coastal Management Program primarily because they have major impacts upon the health and property of coastal residents. Also, directly and indirectly, air pollutants adversely affect water quality and the aquatic biota and wildlife of the region. Atmospheric deposition of toxics is currently being studied to determine the extent to which it poses a threat to the environmental well-being of the Great Lakes region.

### Solid, Hazardous and Infectious Waste

Ohioans generate approximately 1 ton of solid waste per person, per year. Much of that solid waste includes substances that can be harmful if improperly released into the environment. The majority of these household solid wastes are disposed of in the nearly 90 sanitary landfills operating in Ohio.

Of the more than 1240 large-quantity generators of hazardous waste in Ohio, 397 are located in the coastal counties, according to Ohio EPA records based on Generator Annual Reports filed for 1998. There are more than 11,000 small quantity generators in Ohio. There are approximately 50 hazardous waste storage, treatment and disposal facilities operating within Ohio, 15 in coastal counties. Three coastal counties rank in the top ten generators of hazardous waste: Cuyahoga (2), Lucas (8) and Ashtabula (10).

Of the top 10 counties for hazardous waste shipments listed in Annual Reports, three are coastal counties. These counties and their statewide rank are: Cuyahoga (1), Lucas (4) and Ashtabula (5). The coastal counties with significant treatment, storage or disposal activity are Ashtabula, Sandusky, Cuyahoga and Lucas.

Improper management of hazardous waste in the past has created many environmental and public health problems in Ohio. There are approximately 30 abandoned waste sites in Ohio today that are on the National Priority List for action under the federal Comprehensive Environmental Response Compensation Liability Act "Superfund" (CERCLA) program. In the coastal area, five Superfund sites are in Ashtabula County and one is in Lorain County. There are nearly 900 additional sites that, although not of sufficient importance or hazard to be placed on the National Priority List, do pose environmental threats.

As the nation's landfills have begun to fill up and more stringent waste-disposal laws have been enacted, hospitals, labs and clinics are looking more carefully at how they dispose of the infectious wastes they produce. Many choose to incinerate a portion of these materials at the site where they are produced. Others decide to transport their infectious wastes to commercial incinerators. Therefore, the need has arisen to address infectious waste as a separate category of waste and to regulate its transport and treatment.

## Marina Facilities

Water quality improvements and the Lake Erie fishery caused a dramatic upswing in the use of Lake Erie by recreational boaters during the 1980s. The number of marinas in the Lake Erie basin has increased by 30 percent since 1986. Recreational boaters, the general public and the environment must be protected from unsafe drinking water, pollution hazards from improperly disposed wastes, accident hazards and other unsanitary conditions that potentially can result from marina construction and use.