



Health and Environmental Initiatives

Summer 2006



Tim Martin and Dan the Air Bear at a community meeting.

From the Secretary...

IDOT is committed to improving the quality of your roads and the air you breathe during our construction on the Dan Ryan Expressway.

Working with the Dan Ryan Health and Environmental Focus Group, including the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), local health professionals and member organizations, IDOT has taken the unprecedented step of monitoring the air quality, noise and vibration in the areas near the project.

Measurements of particulate matter and other pollutants—along with noise levels—are being compared with numbers recorded before the start of the project.

These ground-breaking initiatives have received the positive attention of the U.S. EPA. IDOT looks forward to working with you as we continue to be "On the Move to Improve For You!"

Sincerely,

Timothy W. Martin
Secretary,
Illinois Department of Transportation

6 Steps to a Better Environment—and a Better Dan Ryan

IDOT created the Health and Environmental Focus Group, where community leaders and environmental experts can bring questions and concerns to the top levels of IDOT.

Much of the environmental and health strategy for the Dan Ryan is a response to feedback from the community.

1. LISTEN

For the first time on any highway project in Illinois, IDOT installed equipment to monitor the quality of the air. Some of the monitors are close to the Ryan; others are located at schools in the nearby community.

2. MONITOR

Construction dust is controlled by such measures as watering, street sweeping and application of chemical dust suppressants.

3. CONTROL

Diesel emissions are reduced with emission-control devices on construction equipment and cleaner fuels (ultra low-sulfur diesel). There are restrictions on how long diesel equipment can idle.

Erosion and sediments that could filter into public waterways or streams are reduced by using special equipment and procedures.

Noise and vibration are reduced with special drilling techniques and low-impact hammers.

Much of the concrete, bituminous pavement (asphalt) and aggregate base course (rocks) removed from the "old" Dan Ryan is recycled and used in the "new" Ryan.

4. RECYCLE

Steel and aluminum from pavement or structures, such as steel reinforcement bars, steel beams, handrails, sign panels or light poles, are recycled.

Landscaping, trees and vines, along with specially designed concrete retaining walls, will make the roadway corridor more attractive and less likely to be targets for graffiti.

5. DESIGN

New high-mast towers provide better lighting.

As the project continues through completion, IDOT will be evaluating the effectiveness of its health and environmental strategy. Changes and improvements will be made as needed, benefiting not only those who live along the Ryan, but residents near other future highway projects as well.

6. EVALUATE

Numbers and Web Sites to Know

www.danryanexpressway.com

www.cleantheair.org

Dan Ryan/Kingery Info Line: 877-411-IDOT

Today's Air Quality Report: 708-865-6320





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Environmental specialists check air monitoring equipment near the Dan Ryan Expressway.

Monitoring the Air Quality

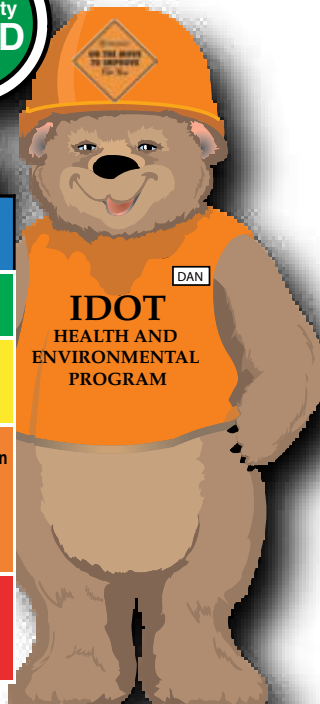
Environmental Design International, Inc., an IDOT contractor, implemented the air-sampling program to aid IDOT in analyzing and acting to reduce impacts during the reconstruction process.

The area included in this sampling and monitoring program extends about one mile from the reconstruction zone in all directions. The approximate boundaries are Halsted Street on the west, Cottage Grove Avenue on the east, 23rd Street on the north and 103rd Street on the south.



Deborah Sawyer, owner of Environmental Design International, Inc., speaks during a meeting of the Dan Ryan Health and Environmental Focus Group at the University of Chicago.

Dan the Air Bear was created to keep the community informed about air quality. As a costumed character, he makes appearances at community events.



Air Quality Category	Health Advisory
Good - "Green Day"	None.
Moderate - "Yellow Day"	Unusually sensitive people should consider reducing prolonged or heavy exertion.
Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups - "Orange Day"	People with heart or lung disease, older adults and children should reduce prolonged or heavy exertion.
Unhealthy - "Red Day"	Everyone should reduce prolonged or heavy exertion - especially people with heart or lung disease, older adults and children.

Source: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Symptoms of Asthma

Asthma is a disease that affects the lungs and airways that deliver air to the lungs. It causes periodic attacks of wheezing and difficulty breathing. Triggers may include dust, mold, pets, exercise and cold weather.

Studies show that African Americans between the ages of 15 and 44 are at a higher risk for serious asthma.

In Hispanics, asthma may run in the family, especially affecting those who come from Puerto Rico. If you have a blood relative who has asthma or allergies, you may be at higher risk for asthma and its symptoms.

If you have asthma or breathing problems, make sure you contact your doctor for professional advice. In emergencies, call 911.

