

AIR QUALITY DEPARTMENT  
STRATEGIC BUSINESS PLAN  
FY 2014/2015 **FINAL**

**I. COUNTY VISION**

Pinal County Government provides progressive and proactive leadership in the areas of economic development, state-of-the-art technologies, growth management, and public services to promote healthy and safe communities.

**II. COUNTY MISSION**

Pinal County Government protects and enhances its citizens' quality of life by providing public services in an ethical, efficient, and responsible manner delivered by a motivated, skilled, and courteous workforce.

**III. DEPARTMENT MISSION**

The Mission of the Air Quality Department is to provide assessment, permitting, education, planning and enforcement services to residents, businesses and leaders of Pinal County so they can breathe and enjoy clean air.

**IV. SUMMARY OF MAJOR SERVICES PROVIDED:**

- **Citizen-oriented services**
  - Air quality monitoring
  - Air quality forecasting and reporting (AQI Index)
  - Complaint response
  
- **Source-oriented services**
  - Permitting of industrial sources
  - Permitting of dust and open burning sources
  - Source-compliance inspections
  
- **Other services**
  - Enforcement
  - State Implementation Plan (SIP) development
  - Emissions inventory development
  - Mandatory Travel Reduction Program Administration
  - Planning & internal/external rule development
  - Public outreach and education
  - Assistance to the Board of Supervisors for air quality matters

**V. CHALLENGES:**

**A. Issue 1: Poor Air Quality; Health Impacts, Public Safety Impacts and Regulatory Impacts**

Prevailing PM-10 (dust) levels in the County consistently violate the health-based ambient standards and interfere with visibility, which, if not addressed, will result in:

- Inordinate public health risks for at least sensitive portions of the population
- Continuing hazards to transportation and public welfare
- Increasing, and potentially un-balanced, regulatory burdens for dust sources
- Imposition of federal sanctions on businesses and governments.

**B. Issue 2: Inadequate Facts, Inadequate Science**

Portions of Pinal County are afflicted by elevated dust levels under both low-wind and high-wind conditions. Activities cause elevated dust levels during low-wind conditions. Disturbed areas constitute the dominant source of

dust during high-wind conditions. The principal activity-related sources of PM-10 (dust) levels in the County include traffic on paved and dirt roads, agricultural operations and construction activity. Those sources are not well-documented and all produce fugitive emissions that are difficult to quantify. Disturbed surfaces that contribute to wind-blown PM-10 emissions, and the activities that cause those disturbances, are similarly not well documented, making the sources of wind-generated emissions even more difficult to quantify. That lack of data, and lack of validated science to quantify emissions even based on valid data will, if not addressed, result in:

- An inability to accurately identify effective measures that will actually solve the public health and public safety risks.

### **C. Issue 3: Divided Regulatory Jurisdiction**

Pinal County "wears several hats" in the context of addressing dust. The County owns and maintains a number of dirt roads and the County has regulatory authority over emissions from stationary (industrial) sources and construction activity. But the County has no regulatory authority over agricultural activity in the problem areas of the county, nor does the County have any authority over Indian Country or activities outside of the County's boundaries. Pinal County can only directly address solutions for those sources it owns or can regulate. Achieving a comprehensive and adequate solution to dust problems will require the County's active participation and advocacy to pursue reductions from all sources of dust even from sources regulated by others. If not adequately addressed, that divided jurisdiction may well result in:

- A disproportionate burden on the citizens and taxpayers of the County.

### **D. Issue 4: The Disconnect Between the Expectations Under the Clean Air Act and Conditions on the Ground in Pinal County**

Many portions of Pinal County that experience recurring dust problems consist largely of open agricultural areas with a dirt road infrastructure. Especially for wind-driven dust events, achieving full compliance with the prevailing PM-10 standards will require substantial expenditures to pave roads, and may require changes in how agricultural operations are conducted. Any measures will require significant effort and expenditure, and particularly in these trying times there appears to be limited will or the resource to actually fund or make those changes. Alternatively, Congress has the authority to revise the Clean Air Act to conform the Act's requirements to reflect the reality on the ground in Pinal County, Arizona. However, it seems unlikely that the political will exists to move such a revision through the federal legislative process, at least in the short term. That conundrum, if not adequately addressed, may well result in:

- The same consequences identified under Issue #1 above.

## **VI. ALIGNMENT TO COUNTY PRIORITIES**

The 2013/14 Countywide Strategic Priorities that directly align to this plan include:

- By 2016, achieve a 3-year, ongoing average of 99.7% healthy days for PM-10 (U.S. Environmental Protection Agency standard for PM-10).

## **VII. DEPARTMENT STRATEGIC GOALS:**

### **A. Timely Turn-around for Permitting Transactions**

On a continuing basis, permit applicants will receive prompt analysis and action on air quality permits, as evidenced by:

- Permit turn-around times that either meet or exceed the benchmark times for similar permits issued by other Arizona jurisdictions.

### **B. Timely Response to Citizen Complaints Transactions**

On a continuing basis, citizens who complain will receive a prompt investigation and response regarding the issue of the complaint, as evidenced by:

- Complaint investigation and response turn-around times that meet or exceed the benchmark times for

similar actions by other Arizona jurisdictions.

### **C. Effective Monitoring Network**

On a continuing basis, the residents of Pinal County will have access to timely, quality assured air quality monitoring data as evidenced by:

- Operation of a comprehensive air pollution monitoring network in accordance with established EPA standards.

### **D. Reduction of Traffic Safety Hazards**

Residents of and travelers through Pinal County will experience a reduced risk of accidents caused by wind-blown dust, as evidenced by:

- By 2018, adoption by competent regulatory bodies of stabilization standards for areas and operations adjoining high-speed roadways.

## **VIII. ANNUAL PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS**

Annual Performance Measures:

1. Monitoring operations will conform to the annual standards in the EPA's rules pertaining to monitoring network operations as measured by an average data collection rate of 90%.  
(Annual Network Review certification)
2. 100% of complaint response times will meet the Department's standard of a 3-day response.  
(Quarterly and Annual compliance program certification)
3. 100% of permit turn-around times will meet and/or beat turn-around benchmarks from other jurisdictions.  
(Quarterly and Annual industrial permit program certification)
4. 99.7% healthy days for PM-10 (U.S. Environmental Protection Agency standard for PM-10).  
(Annual Network Review certification)

**REVENUE BY FUND**

| <b>Program/Activities</b>                      | <b>Cost Center</b> | <b>Total Budget</b> |
|--|--------------------|---------------------|
| General Fund                                   | 0                  | \$0                 |
| <b>General Fund Total</b>                      | <b>0</b>           | <b>\$0</b>          |
| Fund 86  |                    |                     |
| Industrial Permits                             | 3140180            | \$1,334,675         |
| Dust Control Permits                           | 3140260            | \$249,794           |
| <b>Fund 86 Total</b>                           |                    | <b>\$1,584,469</b>  |
| Fund 87  |                    |                     |
| Travel Alternatives-State-<br>Travel Reduction | 3140230            | \$87,000            |
| Primary Quality Assurance                      | 3140331            | \$156,015           |
| <b>Fund 87 Total</b>                           |                    | <b>\$167,700</b>    |

**EXPENDITURES BY FUND**

| <b>Programs/Activities</b>                 | <b># of Full Time Employees</b> | <b># of Part Time Employees</b> | <b>Total Budget</b> |
|--|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------|
| General Fund                               | 0                               | 0                               | \$0                 |
| <b>General Fund Total</b>                  |                                 |                                 | <b>\$0</b>          |
| Fund 86, Cost Center 3140180               |                                 |                                 |                     |
| Industrial Permit                          | 9.75                            | 0.25                            | \$1,334,675         |
| <b>Total Cost Center 3140180</b>           |                                 |                                 | <b>\$1,334,675</b>  |
| Fund 86, Cost Center 3140260               |                                 |                                 |                     |
| Dust Control Permits                       | 3                               | 0.25                            | \$249,794           |
| <b>Total Cost Center 3140260</b>           |                                 |                                 | <b>\$240,500</b>    |
| Fund 87, Cost Center 3140230               |                                 |                                 |                     |
| Travel Alternatives-State-Travel Reduction | 1.25                            | 0                               | \$87,000            |
| <b>Total Cost Center 3140230</b>           |                                 |                                 | <b>\$87,000</b>     |
| Fund 87, Cost Center 3140331               |                                 |                                 |                     |
| Primary Quality Assurance                  |                                 |                                 | \$156,015           |
| <b>Total Cost Center 3140331</b>           |                                 |                                 | <b>\$156,015</b>    |