



**Northeast Texas Air Care (NETAC)
Annual Progress Report**

April 28, 2003

During the past year NETAC continued activities to address both the 1-hour and 8-hour ozone standards in the Northeast Texas area. The voluntary State Implementation Plan (SIP) for the 1-hour ozone standard developed as a cooperative effort among the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ), NETAC, Eastman Chemical Company, TXU Electric Company and American Electric Power/Southwestern Electric Power Company was approved by the TCEQ on March 13, 2002 and submitted to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) on July 18, 2002. A significant portion of the emission reductions contemplated in the voluntary early SIP submittal were implemented prior to the 2002 ozone season and all reductions are scheduled for completion prior to the 2003 ozone season.

During the preceding year ozone air quality in Northeast Texas improved significantly. All monitors of Northeast Texas, including the monitoring site located at East Texas Regional Airport in Gregg County demonstrated that the ozone air quality in Northeast Texas currently attains the 1 hour ozone standard. Additionally, monitoring at Pounds Field Regional Airport in Tyler demonstrates attainment with EPA's 8-hour ozone standard in Smith County.

Over the past year NETAC has also proceeded with air quality planning activities and technical studies to ensure attainment with EPA's more stringent 8-hour ozone standard throughout the Northeast Texas area. With guidance and input from NETAC's Technical Advisory Committee, which includes representatives of EPA, TCEQ, local governments, emission sources, and the environmental community, an ozone air quality model has been developed and refined for evaluating control strategies to attain the 8-hour ozone standard.

NETAC has also continued its efforts to increase understanding of ozone formation and transport in the Northeast Texas area through enhanced monitoring activities. During the 2002 ozone season NETAC was able to site, install, and operate a continuous ozone monitor near Waskom, Texas in order to gain a better understanding of potential transport of ozone from upwind areas. Additionally, NETAC undertook and completed a study utilizing the services of Baylor University aircraft to evaluate potential emission sources contributing to ozone formation

and transport issues by collecting and analyzing data on ozone and ozone precursors on a three dimensional basis.

As a result of NETAC's ongoing efforts and significant improvements in ozone air quality in Northeast Texas over the past year, the Northeast Texas area became eligible to participate in the Early Action Compact program originated by TCEQ and adopted by EPA. In the brief period of time between the end of the 2002 ozone season (October 1, 2002) and the end of the year, the local governments participating in NETAC were able to draft, consider, and approve an Early Action Compact (EAC). The Early Action Compact provides a framework for Northeast Texas to continue its momentum in improving ozone air quality while deferring the effective date of any 8-hour ozone non-attainment designation in the Northeast Texas area, thus avoiding Clean Air Act sanctions such as loss of highway funding and enhanced new source review.