

Education and Response Group

(Emergency Management, PIO's, Operational Responders etc.)

GROUP QUESTIONS:

What are three short term (accomplished within 6 months) steps we can take to enhance our education/response to dust storms?

What are three long term (accomplished 6-24 months) education/response-related goals we should set to help bring a more permanent solution to the dust storm issue?

Short Term Steps for Education/Response

- 1) Partner with ADOT in their large scale interagency public awareness campaign inclusive of PSA's.
 - 1A) As a part of this campaign, establish educational kiosks at rest areas and fast food restaurants that are near the dust trouble spots.
- 2) All relevant agencies must put the word out that all dust events are not equal. There is a large difference between monsoon and fall/winter/spring "dust channel" events especially for traffic. Use slogan "If you can't see through it, don't drive through it." Utilize Governors office of highway safety.
- 3) Have NWS work with ADOT, DPS etc. to develop and share information. Potential database regarding "dust channel" trouble spots with regard to mile markers on I-10.

Long Term Goals for Education/Response

- 1) Flashing signage for drivers might help considering ADOT says drivers get the most information via signs. Can be achieved possibly through grant Money, such as the FHA HSIP program.
- 2) Development of a Dust Threat Index, possibly based on preliminary work done by NWS Tucson.
- 3) Increased dynamic messaging signs linked to enhanced monitoring capabilities.

DISCUSSION IDEAS:

- Dust prevention public information campaign. Multimedia campaign similar to ADOT no snow campaign. Gives information to drivers about what to do in a dust storm. This would be especially helpful for longer distance travelers not familiar with dust hazards.
- Educational Kiosks/Signs at rest areas along Interstate such as Texas Canyon.
- Internal education to officers/responders. What can they do to be better prepared for dust storms.
- Develop dust index or threat level
- Create a database of “hot spots” for “dust channels” in localized events.
- Ability and method for stopping and metering of traffic. Requires lower traffic roadway such as I-8 or two lane roadway. Impossible to do on I-10.
- PSA campaign
- Dust Storm driving slogan “If you can’t see through it, don’t drive through it”
- Dust storm tips with ADOT press releases with upcoming events in the shorter term
- Potential legislation for drivers driving into dust storms. Similar to flash flooding.
- Additional overhead message signs. Display messages in English and Spanish. Radio Stats system.
- Pinal County centric media/distribution system is a problem
- Better use of personal risk messaging across AZ for multiple hazard types. Borrow ideas from other states such as Florida. Need to send consistent and constant message which we arguably have a difficult time with.
- Policy regarding responsibility around the land that is owned privately.
- ADOT coordinate with DPS throughout the state with protocols during expected dust events. These include temporary signs, extra patrols etc.
- Something on Interstate to stop vehicles analogous to Agricultural stations at state border entry points.
- Use social media channels to distribute message
- Get something in the drivers test long term about what to do in dust storms.
- Do we need a different message for what to do in “dust channels”? There is a potential for too many vehicles stopped in one spot in the “dust channel” situations. These are a different beast than the haboob situations in the monsoon.
- ADOT has data that says the way people get information is via signs on the road.
- We should hold similar meetings each year on dust similar to ADEM daylong meeting on wildland fires. This would give all agencies ability to report back to group where we are at.