Border XXI: Air Work Group

Transportation

Border Challenge:

Depending on the origin of the vehicle, Mexican or U.S., automobiles in the border region are subject to very different inspection and maintenance rules. In effect, officials on either side of the border are responsible for only half of the automobile fleet in the region, but the fleet as a whole has an impact on air quality. In fact, vehicle congestion at international bridges in the region account for at least 1 ton per day of volatile organic compound emissions (a precursor to ozone).

EPA Accepts the Challenge:

Vehicle Emissions, Inspection and Maintenance Education Program
The activities funded under this Border XXI small grant constitute an education campaign that will increase participation and compliance with the vehicle inspection and maintenance program. The campaign includes six workshops for automobile mechanics on vehicle emissions diagnostics, maintenance and repair, and environmental health. Six, free vehicle diagnostics and maintenance ecology events were also held.

Travel Demand and Transportation Systems
EPA's Border XXI financed the development of a module to analyze the viability and environmental benefits of a non-motorized transportation mode in the El Paso and Juarez region that meets the cities' growing demand. The final report estimates initial costs for system development, potential for vehicle pollution abatement and the likely decrease in vehicle congestion and wait times at international bridges. Today the cities of El Paso and Juarez are working on a joint mass transit project that will move people between the two cities on a jointly owned bus route, which will decrease private vehicles, and the resulting congestion and pollution at international bridges.

Environmental Controls on Used Vehicles Exported to Mexico from the U.S.
Research project answered questions posed by the US EPA in 1999 about any environmental controls on used vehicles exported to Mexico from the U.S. and the extent of this fleet. The information was used to monitor the possible impact of this market on air quality and vehicle emissions in the region.