



Deer Park Community Advisory Council

Monday, May 23, 2022

DPCAC Updated on Weather and Air Quality Study

James Flynn, Research Associate Professor at the University of Houston, recently introduced Deer Park Community Advisory Council (DPCAC) members to TRACER, the TRacking Aerosol Convection interactions ExpeRiment currently underway at 3 locations in the greater Houston area, including the La Porte Airport. Local residents may see mobile laboratories on trucks around the area or on boats in the bay. They also may notice weather balloons being launched from the airport on Spencer Highway.

Scientists are looking at the effects of tiny particles in the air on the formation of big puffy clouds that often bring us lightning and heavy rain. The study aims to improve forecasting of these pop-up thunderstorms, which sometimes lead to flooding. Researchers are collecting evidence to see whether clouds formed from polluted air behave differently from those composed of clean air; i.e.; whether rainfall is heavier when the air is polluted.

Another TRACER project is checking to see whether air samples from over the *bay* confirm a study from the early 2000s when samples taken over *land* revealed that pollutants from industry, vehicles, and other sources gather early in the day, move out to the gulf, and are carried back over the Houston area with the late afternoon bay breeze. This research will help scientists better understand ozone formation.

The University of Houston in conjunction with several other universities is examining how particles in the air change before, during, and after thunderstorms and whether certain kinds of particles wash out while others do not.

DPCAC members found the presentation “fascinating and informative” and encourage readers to view the slides at www.deerparkcac.org and use the links therein to track the work of TRACER. The agencies and universities conducting the study are listed in the slides.

Read about DPCAC meetings and see summaries of our most recent presentations at www.deerparkcac.org.