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NEWS RELEASE

SWAPCA's new name is Southwest Clean Air Agency

(Vancouver, WA) - The new name of the air pollution agency serving southwest Washington is "Southwest Clean Air Agency." The decision to make a name change occurred at the July 6, 2000 Board of Directors meeting. The former name of the agency (i.e., Southwest Air Pollution Control Authority) has been utilized since 1968 when the agency was first formed.

Jack Burkman, Chairman of the Board of Directors, explained, "The Board of Directors adopted the new name because we believe the old name did not adequately convey our desire to emphasize education and voluntary efforts to maintain clear air in our communities. Telephone surveys of the general public prior to yesterday's action overwhelmingly endorsed the new name as an improvement over the old name of Southwest Air Pollution Control Authority (SWAPCA). The Board of Directors began this self-evaluation process in April 2000 with the updating of the agency's Mission Statement. During the review process, Burkman said, "discussions quickly lead to a realization that we need to make sure the agency's name helps us generate strong, positive public awareness at the grass roots level."

In April 2000, the Southwest Clean Air Agency Board of Directors updated the agency's Mission Statement and established a written set of values that it wanted the agency to operate within. Robert Elliott, Executive Director of the Southwest Clean Air Agency, said "population growth issues in southwest Washington are going to be placing increasing pressure on the air quality in our region and we are going to need strong support from our citizens if the agency is to be successful in achieving its mission." Changing the agency's name is consistent with the pressures on the agency. Elliott said, "the agency needs to be perceived by the general public as operating within their desire for clean, healthy air and not as an intrusive authoritarian government bureaucracy."

The Southwest Clean Air Agency's Board of Directors is made up of: (1) Jack Burkman (Chair and City of Vancouver Council Member); (2) Craig Pridemore (Clark County Commissioner); (3) Bill Lehning (Cowlitz County Commissioner); (4) Don Jensen (City of Longview Council Member); (5) Dennis Hadaller (Lewis County Commissioner); (6) John VerValen (Vice Chair and City of Centralia Representative); (7) Ed McLarney (Skamania County Commissioner); (8) Mary Ann Duncan-Cole (City of Stevenson Representative); (9) Ron Ozment (Wahkiakum County Commissioner); (10) Linda Elliott (City of Cathlamet Council Member; and (11) Milton Cox (Member-at Large).



The new Mission Statement of the Southwest Clean Air Agency is: "To preserve and enhance air quality in southwest Washington." The Board of Director Values are:

1. It is important for the region to first achieve healthy air before focusing on other air quality issues.
2. Local control of southwest Washington air pollution issues should be apparent to our constituency.
3. It is important that compliance with federal and state air pollution regulations be achieved.
4. A partnership that is fully reciprocal is desired with the Washington Department of Ecology and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.
5. All decisions made by the Board should be guided by a principle of doing what is best for the region as a whole.
6. It is important to strive for a good working relationship with the residents and industries of southwest Washington.
7. The effort to obtain stakeholder input on agency actions is a key component of the agency's public involvement process.
8. The pursuit of reductions in air pollution should be based on achieving the largest air quality benefits first.
9. The basis for air pollution reduction measures should be rooted in sound science.
10. Education should be utilized as an important tool for achieving sustained voluntary compliance.
11. The priority of enforcement decisions should first be on ensuring education is achieved and then issuance of civil penalties.
12. Effective enforcement means that recalcitrant sources are brought into clear compliance.
13. The Board prefers to be involved at the policy setting level for the agency rather than the day-to-day management issues.
14. Fiscal expenditures by the agency should be consistent with the Board approved budget.
15. The fair treatment of the agency's employees is an important goal of the Board.

The Southwest Clean Air Agency's jurisdiction in southwest Washington includes Clark, Cowlitz, Lewis, Skamania and Wahkiakum Counties. The agency's new web site is "swcleanair.org."