



CITIZEN'S ADVISORY COUNCIL TO LA PORTE INDUSTRY

Summary of January 4, 2022 Meeting

CAC Updated on Weather and Air Quality Study

The La Porte Airport was chosen as the primary base of TRACER, the TRacking Aerosol Convection interactions ExpeRiment, currently underway at 3 locations in the greater Houston area. James Flynn, Research Associate Professor at the University of Houston, returned to update the Citizen's Advisory Council (CAC) to La Porte Industry on work to date and what is to come. Here are just a few of the projects that may interest residents who may have seen laboratory equipment at the airport, weather balloons being launched from there most days, and mobile labs on trucks or boats.

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 project checks 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 all kinds of 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.

The University of Houston in conjunction with several other universities will examine how particles in the air change before, during, and after thunderstorms and whether certain kinds of particles wash out while others don't. This will be conducted next summer.

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

The CAC meets again Tues. Feb. 1 at 6:00 p.m. by Zoom. Visitors are welcome to hear the results of a study of hazardous material truck transportation on Hwy 146. Contact info@laportecac.org or 713-851-1116 to obtain details.