Back In Time

‘Those who ignore history are bound to repeat it.’

A look back at this month 10 years ago in EM Magazine: June 2009.

To coincide with A&WMA’s 102nd Annual Conference & Exhibition, which was held in Detroit, MI—The Motor City—the June 2009 issue of EM focused on emerging advanced transportation policies and technologies, including electric plug-in vehicles, hydrogen fuel cells, hybrids, and rapid mass transit, along with associated infrastructure issues and the status of vehicle greenhouse gas emissions in the United States a decade ago.

In the article, A Brief History of Technology-Forcing Motor Vehicle Regulations, authors Paul Miller and Matt Solomon traced the history of a “technology-forcing” approach to establishing motor vehicle tailpipe emission standards. This approach, which began in California in the 1960s, sought to advance vehicle pollution control technology by establishing future tailpipe emission limits even if no technologies existed to meet them at the time regulators set the standards.

Quoting from the article: “While technology-forcing approaches grew out of the failures of technology-following policies, efforts akin to technology-following have not entirely disappeared. In 1995, for example, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) proposed an alternative program, called National LEV, for states outside of California to adopt in lieu of the CA LEV program.”

In another article, Moving Toward Clean Vehicles and Fuels: A Global Overview, by Michael Walsh, the author described the growth of the world’s motor vehicle population since the end of World War II and its adverse effect on air quality, followed by the more recent movement toward cleaner vehicles.

Quoting from the article: “Increasing vehicle production and ownership creates continuing pressure to maintain and improve air quality in cities across the world. Compounding the adverse health effects of poor air quality is climate change, another global problem to which motor vehicles are major contributors. Necessary to address these challenges are new emissions control systems and vehicle propulsion advances beyond the conventional internal combustion engine.
Another critically important lesson learned to date is that clean vehicles and high-quality fuels go hand in hand; they must be treated as a system.”

Elsewhere in this issue, Jennifer Dunn discussed the transportation sector’s contribution to worldwide greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. The article, Reducing Transportation Sector Greenhouse Gas Emissions: Case Studies in Operational Strategies, illustrated three broad, interrelated techniques to reduce transportation sector emissions, each with an important role: technology advancements, policy measures, and operational strategies.

Quoting from the article: “Unmistakably, transportation of both freight and passengers is a significant source of GHG emissions. While technology and policy measures are pivotal resources in efforts to reduce emissions from this sector, strategy options that can increase the efficiency of goods and people movement are indispensable, can be near term without the delays inherent in technology and regulation development, and can bring financial benefits such as lower fuel costs for businesses and families.”

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