

Mothers for Clean Air Annual Report

June 2004 – May 2005



Organizational History and Description

Mothers for Clean Air (MfCA) is a local non-profit, 501(c)(3) organization whose 1200 members are concerned about the adverse effects of Houston area air pollution, particularly on the health of children. MfCA advocates for clean air on a state and local level, and conducts educational activities for children and adults on a regional and community level.

MfCA was created in 1995 to serve as an informal membership arm of the Galveston-Houston Association for Smog Prevention (GHASP). In 1996, MfCA incorporated as a separate Texas nonprofit educational corporation. MfCA received federal tax-exempt status in September 1997, and held its first general meeting in November 1997.

MfCA is funded through private foundations, government grants, and individual contributions. A joint MfCA-GHASP grant from the W. Alton Jones Foundation in 1998 helped MfCA establish itself as an independent entity, build membership, and set up an office in the Houston Environmental Center. This grant also funded a project to educate day care staff and parents in low-income neighborhoods about the health hazards of air pollution.

From 1997 to 2001, grants from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) helped MfCA form chapters in four low-income communities: Woodland Acres, Barrett Station, Fifth Ward and Southeast Houston. The purpose of these chapters is to empower residents to identify, prioritize, and address environmental justice issues. In 2003, residents of west Houston organized the Spring Branch/Memorial Chapter, and in 2005, MfCA initiated development of a sixth chapter in Montgomery County. During 2004, MfCA started a 3-year EPA-funded stakeholder collaboration project in southeast Houston.

A joint grant to GHASP and MfCA from Houston Endowment Inc. in 2004 gave us the resources to move to a larger combined office with sufficient space for interns and volunteers. Also in 2004, MfCA assisted Spring Branch Independent School District in implementing an indoor air quality project called *Tools for Schools*.

MfCA educates the general public and advocates for clean air in the eight Houston-area counties defined by the EPA as non-attainment for ozone. MfCA communicates air quality status, current research, health effects and legislative progress through a quarterly newsletter, *Clearing the Air*, mailed to more than 1200 members and stakeholders. E-mail notices of actions to take for clean air are sent to 500 members. Our website www.mothersforcleanair.org provides information and resources on Houston-Galveston air quality for citizens, teachers, and students.

MfCA sponsors educational programs, provides guest speakers, conducts interactive activities for children, and participates in community-based events. Through innovative programming using theater as outreach, MfCA has educated the community with plays and interactive theater, and taught children about air pollution using an original, interactive theatrical game called *Ozone Theater*.