

## Alliance Applauds EPA's Strengthening of Air Quality Standard

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### ***The first new standard in almost 40 years aims to improve air quality for millions, particularly children, the elderly, and people with asthma***

WASHINGTON, DC – “Clean air is a fundamental right of all people and we applaud the EPA's life-saving action today towards improving the quality of the air we breathe. Taking a walk outside with your family should be a healthy activity,” said Dr. Jane L. Delgado, President and CEO of the National Alliance for Hispanic Health (the Alliance), the nation's leading Hispanic health advocacy group and author of *The Latina Guide to Health: Consejos and Caring Answers*. “Today, by enacting stricter standards on sulfur dioxide emissions, the EPA has acted on the best scientific data and taken a stand for the health of all.”

On Thursday, the EPA announced a new one-hour standard of 75 parts per billion (ppb), which will reduce exposure to high short-term concentrations of sulfur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>). New requirements also ensure monitors are placed where SO<sub>2</sub> emissions impact populated areas.

Sulfur dioxide is a highly reactive gas largely produced by power plants and other industrial facilities. Short-term exposure to SO<sub>2</sub> is associated with premature death and increased respiratory symptoms and disease and difficulty in breathing, particularly in at-risk populations including children, the elderly, and asthmatics.

According to the Alliance's Health and Environment Action Network (HEAN), SO<sub>2</sub> airborne pollution has a significant impact on the health and well being of Hispanic communities. Hispanic children are more likely to have asthma than their non-Hispanic peers, an issue that continues into adulthood along with other respiratory conditions. More than two-thirds (70%) of Hispanics live in areas that do not meet federal air quality standards for one or more pollutants. Some 15 percent of Hispanics live within 10 miles of a coal fired power plant — well within the distance resident's health is affected by contaminants, including SO<sub>2</sub>, in the smoke plume.

“No one should have to die or suffer respiratory problems because of pollution in the air we breathe,” emphasized Dr. Delgado. Bilingual health information on air pollution and how to protect yourself is available for free from the Alliance's *Su Familia* National Hispanic Family Health Helpline (1-866-783-2645 or 1-866-SU-FAMILIA) as well as on the Alliance's website ([www.hispanichealth.org](http://www.hispanichealth.org)).

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#### **About the National Alliance for Hispanic Health**

The National Alliance for Hispanic Health is the nation's foremost science-based source of information and trusted

advocate for the health of Hispanics in the United States. The Alliance represents thousands of Hispanic health providers across the nation providing services to more than 15 million each year, making a daily difference in the lives of Hispanic communities and families. For more information, visit [www.hispanichealth.org](http://www.hispanichealth.org) or call 1-866-783-2645.

**About The Health and Environment Action Network (HEAN)**

The Health and Environment Action Network (HEAN) is a national and locally driven effort committed to securing the right of all people to clean air and water. The network works in four communities to document the nexus of environmental risk and health impacts, mobilize community solutions, and secure national and local action on environmental risks that compromise the air we breathe, the water we drink, and the health and well-being of communities. More information is available at [www.HEANaction.org](http://www.HEANaction.org).

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