

FOIA MARKER

**This is not a textual record. This is used as an
administrative marker by the William J. Clinton
Presidential Library Staff.**

Collection/Record Group: Clinton Presidential Records

Subgroup/Office of Origin: Press Secretary

Series/Staff Member: Mike McCurry

Subseries:

OA/ID Number: 11102

FolderID:

Folder Title:
Air Pollution

Stack:

S

Row:

94

Section:

3

Shelf:

10

Position:

1

TALKING POINTS ON BROWNER'S CLEAN AIR TESTIMONY

February 13, 1997

Background: EPA Administrator Browner testified yesterday (2/12) before the Senate Environment and Public Works committee about EPA's proposal to strengthen public health standards for air pollution. Republican committee members focused on scientific and economic issues -- including whether or not EPA plans to ban barbecues and lawn mowers. Claims that these regulations would ban barbecues, fireworks and lawnmowers are false. As you can see from the attached coverage, Browner's testimony helped dispel several of the myths put forward by industry lobbyists.

As you may remember, EPA proposed to strengthen the standards for ozone and particulate matter -- better known as smog and soot -- last November after an extensive, 10 year scientific review. The Clean Air Act directs EPA to review the public health standards for major air pollutants every five years to ensure that they reflect the best current science and, if needed, revise the standards.

Talking points per Loretta Ucelli, EPA Associate Administrator for Communications, Education and Public Affairs:

- After reviewing almost 300 studies, an independent scientific panel concluded that the most recent scientific information provides sufficient evidence that serious health effects are occurring in children, the elderly and other sensitive populations at particulate matter and ozone concentrations at and below our existing standards.
- Clearly, the science calls for action -- action to protect millions of Americans, and especially millions of American children, from harmful air pollution. In a most compelling way, the science leads us to the new, stronger standards that EPA has proposed for smog and soot.
- If new standards are adopted, EPA will work with all those affected -- state government, local governments, community leaders, businesses large and small -- to find common sense, cost-effective strategies for meeting them.
- This is a vital issue of tremendous importance to millions of American families. It is not about outdoor barbecues and lawnmowers. It is about finding ways in which we can all work together to ensure that the air we breathe is healthy, and that our standards protect the greatest possible number of Americans -- especially our children.

I hope this is helpful. If you have questions or would like more information, please call me or Melissa Bonney at 202/260-9828.

EPA Chief Says Air Rules Won't Outlaw Backyard Barbecues

By JAMES GERSTENZANG
TIMES STAFF WRITER

WASHINGTON—The Clinton administration had a strong message Wednesday for Americans who may be worried about the tougher clean air standards it is proposing: Don't be fooled by what you hear—the resulting regulations will not come between you and your barbecue.

No more obsessing about the relationship with your lawn mower, Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Carol Browner said in her first congressional testimony about the new standards. And breathe easy—your Fourth of July fireworks are not yet outlawed.

"This is a vital issue of tremendous importance to millions of America's families," Browner told the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee. "It is not about outdoor barbecues and lawn mowers. It is not about fireworks on the Fourth of July. It is about whether children go outdoors on the Fourth of July and enjoy those fireworks."

The more serious debate over the air quality proposal—and the focus of a well-funded opposition group made up of manufacturing industries and oil companies, among others—has turned on whether the plan is supported by sound scientific research and how much it will cost to carry it out.

Scientific studies leave no doubt that the new plan is valid, Browner said, and the costs will be considered before specific regulations go into effect.

The proposal sets levels at which air would be considered dangerously polluted with ozone, or smog, and with particles of soot a fraction of the width of a human hair. Then, regulations would be established to help communities reach the lower levels of pollution, by reducing emissions over a period that could stretch more than a decade.

That is where the debate turns to Americans' lifestyles and their backyard gadgets.

Sometimes, it's in the news, sometimes in the great outdoors, sometimes in radio advertisements and sometimes from

office building on Wednesday, critics have sought to fire up opposition to the proposed standards by asserting that such personal pollutants as barbecues, power boats, lawn mowers and other small-motor implements—and even fireworks—would be outlawed as communities try to meet the new air quality levels.

So Browner was asked if she could offer assurance that backyard barbecues were not in jeopardy?

"You are free to barbecue, mow your lawn and enjoy the Fourth of July fireworks," Browner said in response to a question from Sen. Joseph I. Lieberman (D-Conn.).

Indeed, she did not mention it, but jurisdiction in California has been split on such matters by ordering a reformulation of chemical lightbulbs and redesigning the small gasoline engines used in garden tools.

Most of Browner's testimony dealt with the scientific and economic issues involved in continuing to improve the quality of the nation's air as well as on whether the nation will be forced to give up its recreational pursuits. But it did little to quell qualms among the committee members, particularly Republicans.

The EPA issued its proposal last November, acting under a court order enforcing a provision of the Clean Air Act. Under the legislation, the agency must update the air standards every five years to take into account the most recent scientific determinations about the health effects of dirty air. The agency must make its proposal final by July 19.

The proposal has generated debate among the administration, Congress, state and local governments, manufacturers, small businesses, environmentalists, health professionals, and others, including respiratory patients, to whom many forms of poor air often pose particularly serious risks, in the view of health experts.

Critics say the proposal would cost billions of dollars to carry out, but they have balked at providing specific figures on how much it would cost individual consumers.

Opponents' most recent line of attack



Associated Press
Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Carol Browner testified on Capitol Hill Wednesday about new, tougher air quality standards.

insufficient data in reaching its conclusions, and that a biological connection between the smallest particles of soot and respiratory disease has not been established.

"We looked at some 5,000 scientific studies on the health effects of smog and soot" and 240 studies subject to peer review, Browner said.

She added that an independent panel of scientists concluded that "the re

evidence that serious health effects are occurring in children, the elderly and other sensitive populations at particulate matter and ozone concentrations at and below existing standards."

The proposal would lower the standard for ozone, or smog, to 0.05 parts per million averaged over eight hours from the current 0.12 parts per million average over a single hour.

It also would set tougher standards