



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
July 7, 2011

Julie O'Brien (312) 628-0251

EPA finalizes rule to slash coal power plant emissions
**** Interview Opportunity ****

WHAT: U.S. EPA today finalized the Cross-state Air Pollution Rule, which will reduce coal power plant emissions of sulfur dioxide (SO₂) and nitrogen oxides (NO_x) across the United States. The measure is expected to save up to 34,000 lives and prevent 400,000 asthma attacks each year.

WHY: This legislation will require that approximately 180 coal power plants nationwide collectively lower their SO₂ emissions by 73 percent and NO_x levels by 54 percent of the levels emitted in 2005. To do so, power plant owners will need to use switch to cleaner fuels, install and operate pollution control equipment, and shut down some obsolete plants. Finalizing this rule completes a federal effort started in 2005 aimed at reducing unhealthy ozone and fine particle air pollution levels plaguing urban areas in the eastern half of the U.S.

Coal power plants contribute to high pollution levels that increase asthma attacks, bronchitis cases, heart attacks, strokes, emergency room visits and hospital stays, and premature deaths. Air pollution also leads to millions of lost school and workdays due to sickness. This policy will save on healthcare costs, lost productivity and pollution reduction.

WHEN: Thursday, July 7 and Friday, July 8

WHO: **Brian Urbaszewski** – Director Environmental Health Programs
Respiratory Health Association of Metropolitan Chicago
Available on site or by phone

Ravi Kalhan, MD, MS – Assistant Professor of Medicine & Director, Asthma-COPD Program
Division of Pulmonary and Critical Care Medicine
Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine
Available by phone

Weeks Ringle
Oak Park, Ill. resident living with asthma who testified at a hearing on this rule in Chicago
Available by phone

###

Respiratory Health Association of Metropolitan Chicago has been a local public health leader since 1906. Today, the association addresses asthma, COPD, lung cancer, tobacco control and air quality with a comprehensive approach involving research, education and advocacy activities. For more information, visit www.lungchicago.org.