

9 November 2012

Mayor used the Pollution Suppressor to save himself not others

Mayor targeted the use of pollution suppressants at sites estimated, through computer modelling and monitoring, to have the highest daily levels of dangerous airborne particles i.e. the worst legal exposures not the worst population exposures

Pollution suppressants were used every day during the Olympic and Paralympic Games at locations expected to show increases in emissions. Clean Air in London congratulates the Olympic authorities for not using the Pollution Suppressor in front of key air pollution monitors during the Olympic or Paralympic Games

Transport for London (TfL) has released details of the use of pollution suppressants in London in 2012 after a request from Clean Air in London (CAL) under the Environmental Information Regulations. In an email dated 1 November TfL said:

“The sites where CMA [pollution suppressant] has been applied, outside of the Olympic period, were those sites with the highest daily mean PM₁₀ [dangerous airborne particle] concentration values both through modelling carried out in the development of the Mayor’s Air Quality Strategy, and through information gathered through the collection of data from monitoring.”

TfL also confirmed that that the Pollution Suppressor was used every day during the Olympic and Paralympic Games at locations expected to show increases in PM₁₀ and NO_x [oxides of nitrogen] emissions. Maps of the routes were also released which confirm pollution suppressants were not used in front of the Marylebone Road or Upper Thames Street monitoring stations during the Games.

Simon Birkett, Founder and Director of Clean Air in London (CAL), said:

“It has taken nearly a year to confirm the Mayor targeted the use of pollution suppressants on the sites in London most likely to exceed legal limits for dangerous airborne particles (PM₁₀), whether identified through computer modelling or monitoring.

“The Mayor has used the Pollution Suppressor to save himself not others. He targeted systematically the places most likely to report a breach of public laws rather than those where people, including the most vulnerable, are most exposed to air pollution e.g. schools, hospitals and the busiest shopping streets. By using pollution suppressants in front of the Marylebone Road monitoring station, which is used by the Government to report to the European Commission whether London as a whole is complying with PM₁₀ legal limits, the Mayor has tampered with the very core of public health protections.

“An ‘unfortunate’ further consequence of the Mayor’s approach is that the air quality monitor most-used to warn the public of smog episodes may have failed sometimes to do so. In contrast, Clean Air in London congratulates the Olympic authorities for not using the Pollution Suppressor in front of key air pollution monitors during the Olympic or Paralympic Games.

“In Clean Air in London’s view, the Mayor is guilty of public health fraud on an industrial scale.”

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