

2010 DALLAS-FORT PASSIVE INFRARED AERIAL SURVEY

Beginning April 7, 2010, residents in the Dallas-Fort Worth areas may notice a white helicopter (Tail Number: N141LS) hovering over or near pipelines, oil and gas production facilities, and other industrial facilities.

The helicopter is equipped with a specialized infrared camera called the HAWK that can image volatile organic compounds (VOCs) and other hydrocarbon emissions invisible to the eye. VOCs are a class of compounds present in common things like gasoline and used as solvents or industrial chemicals. VOCs can combine with nitrogen oxides (NOx) in the presence of sunlight to form ground-level ozone.

When the camera detects possible hydrocarbon emissions, the technician on the helicopter will note the time and location and other information about the emissions source. The helicopter may hover or circle a particular location for an extended period of time to gather images and data on potential emission sources.

This project is a follow up to similar projects conducted in the Texas Gulf Coast, Dallas-Fort Worth, and Tyler-Longview-Marshall areas by the TCEQ to identify hydrocarbon sources that may potentially be unreported or under-reported. Identifying the emissions will assist the agency in improving the region's air quality.

Helicopter flights will be conducted over oil and gas production areas in the following counties: Denton, Johnson, Parker, and Tarrant. The helicopter flights will conclude no later than April 30, 2010.

Technical and logistical information contacts: Adam Bullock, telephone (512) 239-5155, abullock@tceq.state.tx.us or Kevin Cauble, telephone (512) 239-1874, kcauble@tceq.state.tx.us.

Media contact: Terry Clawson, telephone (512) 239-0046, pager (512) 875-9213