

SUMMARY OF BOARD ITEM

ITEM # 02-4-1: HEALTH UPDATE

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Informational Item

DISCUSSION: Staff will update the Board on two published papers on particulate matter less than 2.5 microns in diameter (PM2.5) and health effects.

SUMMARY AND IMPACTS: The impact of the fine fraction (PM2.5) of particulate matter on public health is of increasing concern to health officials. Epidemiological studies that examine both the short and long-term health impacts of PM2.5 are currently being evaluated by both federal and State scientists for use in setting PM2.5 standards. Two important papers have been published regarding an American Cancer Society Cohort evaluating long-term exposure to PM2.5 and its association with lung cancer mortality and cardiopulmonary mortality. The health update this month will focus on these two studies. The first study, published in 1994, was controversial. The latest study, published in March of this year, is a follow-up to the original publication, and addresses criticisms of the original paper. The investigators concluded that long-term exposure to fine particulate air pollution is an important risk factor for lung cancer mortality and cardiopulmonary mortality.

