



## **PRESS RELEASE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**June 25, 2003**

### **OKLAHOMA CITY HOSTS LARGEST U.S. URBAN ATMOSPHERIC STUDY**

*Nearly 150 Researchers Organized by Federal Agencies and Academic Institutions to Conduct Experiment*

OKLAHOMA CITY – The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE), the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and the U.S. Department of Defense – Defense Threat Reduction Agency (DTRA) are sponsoring a month-long atmospheric dispersion study in Oklahoma City, Okla., June 28 to July 31, 2003. Nearly 150 scientists, engineers, and student assistants are dedicated to this study.

The study will track the air movement of safe, non-toxic tracer gases in and around city buildings. This will aid scientists in better understanding how chemical and biological agents are spread. Resulting data will be used to enhance and develop urban specific computer models that will allow emergency management, law enforcement and other personnel to train for and respond to potential terrorist attacks.

A series of outdoor and indoor experiments will be conducted in the downtown area with approximately 200 portable wind stations and more than 200 small portable tracer samplers set-up to measure winds and outdoor tracer concentrations. The equipment will be placed on sidewalks, buildings, within secure areas and on light poles or other tall poles about one week before the study begins and removed approximately one week after it ends.

Dependent upon weather and wind conditions the following schedule will apply to the downtown areas:

- Portable instruments will be set up in four-by-four-block area between Hudson Ave. and Santa Fe Ave., and between Sheridan Ave. and Dean A. McGee Ave.;
- The west lane of Robinson Ave. will be closed for approximately 50 feet just south of its intersection with Sheridan Ave.;
- Testing will be conducted between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m.;
- Four one-day indoor studies are also planned for the second and third weeks of July.

Oklahoma City agreed to host the study, and city officials have provided considerable support. The Oklahoma Climatological Survey, the University of Oklahoma, and its research partners are providing local expertise and assistance.

For more information about Joint Urban 2003, visit the website at <http://JU2003.pnl.gov> or contact Cerry Leffler, Oklahoma Climatological Survey at (405) 325-2541, or Major Linda Ritchie, DTRA Public Affairs, (703) 767-5870, or Michelle Petrovich, DHS Public Affairs, (202) 282-8010, or Geoff Harvey, DOE/Pacific Northwest National Laboratory, (509) 372-6083.