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News Release

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Special Ceremony Planned to Unveil Innovative Air Quality Monitoring Bench

The Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), the Myriad Botanical Gardens and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) will unveil an innovative air quality monitoring park bench during a special ceremony at 3:30 p.m., Tuesday, November 10, 2015 at the Children's Garden in the Myriad Botanical Gardens.

"Oklahoma City is honored to be chosen as one of only five cities nationwide to house a Village Green Station. This park bench is a great tool to get people, particularly children, interested in air quality and understand the importance of air quality in our everyday lives," said DEQ Executive Director Scott Thompson.

The park bench, located within the Children's Garden, is equipped with air quality monitoring computers and weather instruments that report up-to-the minute concentrations of air pollutants in the ambient air at the park. Known as the Village Green Station, this project was developed by EPA to provide communities with air quality information where they work, play, and live.

"New technology like the real-time air monitoring at the Village Green sites brings people closer to EPA's work," said EPA Region 6 Administrator Ron Curry. "We hope this site can be a gathering place for the community to learn about and engage with their environment."

The air pollution sensors measure two types of air pollutants: ozone and particulate matter, both of which can be harmful to human health. Weather conditions monitored by the station include wind speed and direction, temperature, rainfall, and relative humidity, which are key factors for understanding local air quality trends. Data collected is available on a display near the bench and is streamed to the Village Green Project webpage for the public to view online. The data is reviewed instantly to ensure its quality and accuracy prior to it being displayed online.

"We are excited to partner with DEQ by providing a site for the bench installation in order for all ages to learn about and raise awareness for air quality issues when they visit our Gardens," said Executive Director of Myriad Gardens Foundation Maureen Heffernan.

For more information on the Village Green Station, visit <http://www.deq.state.ok.us/aqdnew/monitoring/villagegreen/index.html>.

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