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FACT SHEET

PROPOSED IMPLEMENTATION GUIDANCE FOR THE REVISED GROUND-LEVEL OZONE AND PARTICULATE MATTER NATIONAL AMBIENT AIR QUALITY STANDARDS AND REGIONAL HAZE PROGRAM

TODAY'S ACTION

- ! The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is issuing proposed planning guidance for public comment for States to use in meeting EPA's revised air quality standards for ground-level ozone (smog) and particulate matter.
- ! EPA is making the guidance available for 30-days comment, which will begin on the date EPA publishes a notice of availability in the Federal Register. EPA will publish the notice shortly.
- ! The guidance addresses four major areas:
 - # It lays out a scheme for "classifying" areas that do not meet the ozone or particulate matter standards, including designation and classification dates, anticipated State implementation plan due dates and anticipated attainment dates.
 - # It clarifies the requirement that States adopt reasonably available control measures into ozone and particulate matter State implementation plans.
 - # It provides details on the State implementation plan requirements for ozone "transitional" nonattainment areas and PM₁₀ nonattainment areas.
 - # It provides initial guidance on the "reasonable further progress" requirement for ozone nonattainment areas classified as "traditional."
- ! In October 1998, EPA plans to issue additional draft guidance covering other areas related to the revised ozone and particulate matter standards and the regional haze program which are indicated in today's guidance by placeholders. EPA plans to consolidate the later guidance with this guidance to issue one document by December 1998.
- ! This guidance reflects President Clinton's July 16, 1997 directive to EPA Administrator Browner, which laid out a common-sense implementation strategy for the revised air quality standards.

WHAT IS THE CLASSIFICATION SCHEME FOR THE 8-HOUR OZONE STANDARD?

- ! The Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990 prescribed a specific classification scheme for designating areas not meeting the 1-hour ozone standard. However, the Clean Air Act does not prescribe a classification scheme for the revised ozone standard. The Clean Air Act grants EPA authority, when revising air quality standards, to create classifications for nonattainment areas, as needed.

- ! The EPA is planning on creating three classifications for the 8-hour ozone standard: transitional, traditional, and international transport. By July 2000, all areas of the country that do not meet the 8-hour ozone standard will be designated and classified into one of these three categories.

“Transitional” Nonattainment Areas

- ! An area can seek “transitional” classification provided that, by 2000, it meets the 1-hour standard (and thus has that standard revoked) and submits an early plan meeting the various requirements outlined below.
- ! For areas in the East projected to meet the revised ozone standard based on EPA’s rule requiring regional reductions of nitrogen oxides (a precursor to ozone formation known as NOx), the transitional area plan will consist primarily of the plan States will be required to submit by that rule, plus documentation referencing EPA modeling showing that the area will attain through the rule (both proposed to be due by September 1999).
- ! For other areas covered by the regional NOx rule, the plan for areas classified as transitional will also consist primarily of the additional control measures needed for attainment (due by May 2000).
- ! For areas outside the region covered by EPA’s regional NOx rule, the plan for areas classified as transitional will consist primarily of control measures sufficient to show attainment (due by May 2000).
- ! For these areas, EPA anticipates the attainment date will be by no later than December 31, 2003.

“Traditional” Nonattainment Areas

- ! No special qualifications are required for an area to be classified as “traditional.” If an area does not qualify for or does not pursue one of the other two classifications, then EPA will classify the area as “traditional.” Areas that violate only the 8-hour ozone standard and areas that violate both the 1- and 8-hour standards can be classified as “traditional.” The areas violating both standards will continue to implement all the programs required under the Clean Air Act (e.g., rate of progress improvements, etc.).
- ! Areas classified as “traditional” will be required to submit their plans demonstrating attainment with the 8-hour ozone standard by July 2003. EPA anticipates the attainment date for areas that violate only the 8-hour standard will be no later than December 31, 2005. EPA anticipates the attainment dates for areas that violate both the 1-hour and 8-hour standards will be no later than December 31, 2008 or July 18, 2010, depending on the area’s 1-hour standard classification.

“International” Transport Nonattainment Areas

- ! Certain areas affected by international emissions can be classified as “international transport” areas. These areas may include places that violate only the 8-hour standard, and those that violate both the 1- and 8-hour standards.

- ! Such an area must submit a plan that shows that it would attain the 8-hour ozone standard if it were not for the international emissions. That plan will be due by July 2003. EPA anticipates an attainment date for these areas of no later than December 31, 2005.

WHAT ARE THE CLASSIFICATION SCHEMES FOR THE REVISED PARTICULATE MATTER (PM) STANDARDS?

Revised PM₁₀ Standard

- ! The Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990 explicitly set out a classification scheme for PM₁₀ nonattainment areas. EPA will use that same classification scheme for the revised PM₁₀ standard. For that standard, all area designations will be made by July 2000. All initial nonattainment areas will be classified as “moderate”. The attainment plan for the “moderate” areas will be due by January 2002. The attainment date for these areas will be no later than December 31, 2006.

- # A “moderate” area can be reclassified as “serious” if EPA determines it cannot practicably attain the air quality standard or it fails to attain the standards. If an area fails to attain and becomes “serious,” it must submit a plan delineating the best available control measures, as well as a plan demonstrating attainment. (These plans are due either by 18 months or by 4 years from reclassification, depending on the plan and the circumstances of reclassification.) Areas classified as “serious” will have to attain no later than December 31, 2010.

New PM_{2.5} Standard

- ! EPA believes it is premature to lay out a classification scheme for the new PM_{2.5} standard until more air quality data become available. Consistent with the July 1997 Presidential Directive, EPA will not be requiring control measures for PM_{2.5} until after the PM_{2.5} standards are reviewed and EPA makes PM_{2.5} nonattainment area designations. However, if the PM_{2.5} air quality problem is regional in nature (i.e., if, like ozone, fine particles are transported long distances, so that emissions from one State can impact another downwind), EPA believes that a classification scheme similar to that being established for ozone may be appropriate for PM_{2.5} nonattainment areas.

WHAT IS EPA’S POLICY FOR AREAS TO IMPLEMENT CONTROL MEASURES UNDER THE REVISED STANDARDS FOR OZONE AND PM?

- ! Nonattainment areas must provide for implementation of all reasonably available control measures as expeditiously as practicable for attainment of the air quality standards.
- ! Under the 8-hour ozone standard, if an area demonstrates it can attain the standard with the emission control measures in its State implementation plan, then EPA will consider that the area has met the Act's requirements for "reasonably available control measures" and additional measures will not be required.
- ! EPA's policy on the requirement for "reasonably available control measures" for the revised PM₁₀ standards remains the same as the policy that applied to the pre-existing PM₁₀ standards. PM₁₀ nonattainment areas classified as moderate must adopt all reasonable measures that help the area attain.
- ! For PM_{2.5}, EPA expects that the approach on "reasonably available control measures" for the PM_{2.5} NAAQS will be similar to the general approach for the ozone 8-hour NAAQS and the PM₁₀ NAAQS. Under the approach, the requirement is based on measures that are needed for attainment and not on specific source control measures mandated under the Clean Air Act. Once additional information becomes available, including PM_{2.5} monitoring data, EPA will provide further guidance. Consistent with the Presidential Directive, EPA will not be requiring control measures until after the PM_{2.5} standards are reviewed and EPA makes PM_{2.5} nonattainment area designations.

REVISED NATIONAL AMBIENT AIR QUALITY STANDARD FOR OZONE: WHAT ARE THE STATE IMPLEMENTATION PLAN REQUIREMENTS FOR TRANSITIONAL AREAS?

- ! **Attainment demonstration.** (1) For areas that attain the 8-hour ozone standard through EPA's regional NOx reduction rule, the State can rely on EPA modeling for that rule as the demonstration (unless the State elects to do its own modeling). (2) Areas that will not attain the ozone standard without additional measures beyond the emissions reductions associated with the NOx rule must submit a demonstration that uses existing data and analyses to show attainment with a technique EPA will provide (unless the State elects to do its own modeling). (3) For areas not covered by EPA's regional NOx rule, EPA will provide attainment demonstration guidance later this year.
- ! **Reasonably available control measures.** For areas projected to attain the ozone standard through EPA's regional NOx rule, this requirement will be met if a State submits a State implementation plan, as required by the rule. If an area needs measures for attainment beyond the emissions reductions required by the rule, this requirement will be met if the area submits a plan including the additional measures needed for attainment.
- ! **Transportation conformity.** The plan for "transitional" areas must contain a transportation conformity "budget" (i.e., the amount of emissions an area can emit) based on an area's plan to demonstrate attainment with the ozone standard. The details of how

transportation conformity will work for these areas will be explained in a forthcoming rulemaking.

- ! **Reasonable further progress.** For areas projected to attain the ozone standard through EPA's regional NO_x reduction rule, the reasonable further progress requirement will be met if the State achieves and tracks the emissions reductions on schedule in that rule to ensure they are achieved. For areas where additional measures are needed to attain or EPA's rule does not apply, reasonable further progress will be the emission reductions achieved by the control measures needed for attainment.
- ! **New source review.** EPA will address this requirement in a forthcoming rule.
- ! **Contingency measures.** For areas projected to attain through EPA's regional NO_x reduction rule, contingency measures for failure to attain will consist of a commitment to analyze the cause of the failure and to adopt necessary measures. For other areas, contingency measures for failure to attain will consist of emission reductions of the ozone precursor providing most of the emission reductions needed for attainment.

REVISED NATIONAL AMBIENT AIR QUALITY STANDARDS for PM₁₀: WHAT ARE THE PLAN REQUIREMENTS FOR MODERATE AND SERIOUS AREAS?

- ! **Attainment demonstration.** States must develop attainment demonstrations by performing local modeling consistent with existing EPA modeling guidelines
- ! **Control measures.** For "moderate" areas, reasonable available control measures must be implemented by July 2004 based on an analysis of the attainment needs of the area. For "serious" areas, best available control measures must be implemented four years from the date of reclassification and must be based on the maximum degree of emission reduction determined on a case-by-case basis taking into account certain factors.
- ! **Reasonable further progress.** Plans must provide for quantitative milestones. If an area fails to make a milestone, the State must submit a plan revision assuring it will achieve the next milestone (or attain the standard, if there is no next milestone).
- ! **Contingency measures.** Once EPA determines an area must be reclassified as "serious" for failure to attain, the State must implement contingency measures.
- ! **New source review/conformity.** States must comply with the existing program under EPA regulations. In addition, when EPA revokes the pre-existing PM₁₀ standard in areas attaining those standards as of September 16, 1997, conformity will no longer apply if the areas do not have EPA-approved maintenance plans.

WHAT ELSE DOES THE GUIDANCE ADDRESS?

- ! The guidance provides initial information on reasonable further progress for “traditional” ozone areas that violate both the 8-hour and 1-hour ozone standards. For these areas, this requirement is satisfied up to the time the area attains the 1-hour standard if the area meets the “reasonable further progress” requirements for the 1-hour standard through that date.

BACKGROUND

- ! In the upper atmosphere, ozone occurs naturally and protects people from the sun’s ultraviolet radiation. At ground-level, ozone results from pollution and can harm human health and the environment. Ground-level ozone is the primary constituent of smog. Particulate matter consists of the solid particles and liquid droplets found in the air. Individually, these particles and droplets are invisible to the naked eye. Collectively, however, they can appear as clouds or a fog-like haze. Both coarse and fine particles are of concern to human health.
- ! On July 17, 1997, following a lengthy scientific review process, EPA revised the national ambient air quality standards for ground-level ozone and particulate matter.
- ! Specifically, EPA is phasing out and replacing the previous 1-hour ozone standard with an 8-hour standard to protect against longer exposure periods. The 1-hour standard will continue to apply to an area for an interim period until EPA makes a determination that the area has air quality meeting the 1-hour standard. In addition, EPA revised the primary and secondary particulate matter standards by establishing annual and 24-hour standards for smaller or “fine” particles (particles 2.5 micrometers in diameter or smaller) and by changing the form of the existing 24-hour and annual particulate matter standards (for particles 10 micrometers in diameter or smaller).
- ! EPA will make area designations for the revised ozone and PM₁₀ standards by July 2000. For the PM_{2.5} standards, EPA will designate areas in the 2004 to 2005 timeframe. For the ozone and PM_{2.5} standards, within three years after EPA designates an area nonattainment the State must submit a plan to EPA. (A State seeking the ozone transitional classification for an area must submit the plan by 2000.) The plan must address several elements: (1) attaining the standard, (2) implementing control measures, (3) showing “reasonable further progress” toward attainment, (4) providing for contingency measures for failure to make progress or attain, (5) conducting “new source review,” and (6) requiring conformity of transportation and air quality planning.
- ! On November 7, 1997, EPA proposed to require 22 states and the District of Columbia to submit state implementation plans that address the regional transport of ground-level ozone, the main component of smog (referred to as the “regional NOx rule”). By improving air quality and reducing emissions of NOx, the actions directed by these plans will decrease the transport of ozone in the East. EPA plans to finalize the action by September 1998.

For Further Information

- ! Interested parties can download the implementation guidance from the Internet (<http://ttnwww.rtpnc.epa.gov/implement/actions.htm>). The guidance is listed in a document entitled “Major Action Items to Reinvent Ozone and PM NAAQS and Regional Haze Implementation,” which also contains a complete list of planned activities related to implementation of the new national ambient air quality standards.

- ! For further information about the draft implementation guidance being made available now, contact Chris Stoneman of EPA's Office of Air Quality Planning and Standards at (919) 541-0823. For further information about the draft implementation guidance to be made available in October 1998, contact John Silvasi of EPA's Office of Air Quality Planning and Standards at (919) 541-5666.

- ! EPA's Office of Air and Radiation's homepage on the Internet contains a wide range of information on the ozone and particulate matter standards, as well as many other air pollution programs and issues. The Office of Air and Radiation's home page address is: (<http://www.epa.gov/oar/>). The web site for general information about the new ozone and particulate matter standards is: (<http://www.epa.gov/airlinks>).