

12/1/99

**PROPOSED ACTION ON
1-HOUR OZONE ATTAINMENT DEMONSTRATIONS
FOR 10 AREAS**

FACT SHEET

TODAY'S ACTION

- ! EPA is proposing to take action on air quality plans for 10 major urban areas and is making those plans available for public comment.
- ! The plans are known as 1-hour ozone attainment demonstrations. The plans, based on air quality modeling, outline emission reductions necessary for an area to meet the 1-hour standard for ground level ozone, or smog.
- ! The 10 affected areas are: Atlanta; Baltimore; Houston; New York; Philadelphia; Chicago; Milwaukee; Western Massachusetts (Springfield); Greater Connecticut (Hartford); and Washington, D. C. Attainment demonstrations for these areas will involve 13 states and the District of Columbia.
- ! The plans show a strong commitment to reducing smog, but some states will need to take additional steps before their plans can be approved. EPA will continue to work closely with these states and the District of Columbia as they revise their plans.
- ! EPA is proposing to:
 - # Approve the plans for these areas provided states make certain changes. The changes break down as follows:
 - ! Nine states (those responsible for plans for Atlanta, Baltimore, Houston, New York and Philadelphia) will have to revise their plans to include additional measures for reducing smog-causing pollution.
 - ! With the exception of Georgia, Texas and Massachusetts, all of the states plus the District of Columbia will need to submit motor vehicle emission budgets as they update their plans to ensure that transportation projects don't aggravate air quality problems in the affected areas.
 - # Today's proposal also allows EPA to disapprove the plans if changes are not made.

- ! In reviewing and determining whether to approve the 1-hour attainment demonstrations, EPA followed these general guidelines:
- When making certain air quality modeling calculations, states can take credit for reductions that would result from the NO_x SIP Call. The NO_x SIP Call is EPA's rule aimed at reducing nitrogen oxides regionally. Nitrogen oxides are a primary precursor of smog.
 - States also could take credit, as appropriate, for other federal smog-reduction measures, including EPA's proposed Tier 2 vehicle and low-sulfur fuel standards.
 - Certain attainment plans will have to include enforceable commitments to adopt additional local measures to achieve the 1-hour ozone standard by a specific date. (Deadlines vary by area.)
 - Each state will be called on to include in its plan enforceable commitments to conduct a mid-course review to determine the need for future additional emission reductions.
 - Each state's plan must include an adequate motor vehicle emissions budget to help assure that transportation projects do not cause air quality problems.

BACKGROUND & CHRONOLOGY

- ! In 1979, EPA issued a national standard for ground-level ozone that measured ozone concentrations over a 1-hour period.
- ! In 1990, Congress amended the Clean Air Act to require states to revise their State Implementation Plans, or SIPs. A State Implementation Plan is a state's strategy and policies for meeting air quality standards and visibility goals.
- ! The 1990 amendments classified areas into several categories according to the severity of their smog problems. Each category includes specific requirements and deadlines for reducing smog. Areas classified as "moderate" were to demonstrate that they would attain the 1-hour standard by November 1996; "serious" areas were to demonstrate attainment by November 1999, unless EPA granted an extension. "Severe" areas have until 2005 or 2007 to demonstrate attainment, depending on the level of the smog problem.
- ! In 1995, EPA extended the dates for states to submit their plans for a number of states with areas that were unable to complete the requirements as scheduled because upwind pollution prevented them from meeting the ozone standard. These areas are affected by pollutants that have traveled from other areas (known as regional transport).
- ! In exchange for the extension, the affected states agreed to participate in a 37-state process to

assess the ozone transport problem. Through a two-year partnership known as the Ozone Transport Assessment Group, or OTAG, EPA worked with the 37 easternmost states, the District of Columbia, industry representatives and environmental groups to recommend strategies to address the movement of ozone-forming pollutants across state boundaries. The group worked from 1995 to 1997.

- ! In September 1998, acting in response to OTAG’s recommendations and on additional analysis, EPA issued a rule (known as the “NOx SIP call”) requiring several states to take steps to reduce nitrogen oxides, which contribute to the formation of ground-level ozone, or smog. These actions – amendments to SIPs – would decrease the transport of nitrogen oxides and ozone across state boundaries in the eastern United States, thereby helping the “moderate,” “serious” and “severe” areas reach attainment through local controls.
- ! States submitted their plans between 1998 and 1999. EPA is moving ahead with the process to ultimately approve or disapprove the attainment demonstrations. EPA will continue working with states and cities as they revise and improve their plans.
- ! Texas submitted a revised plan for Houston on Nov. 15, 1999. EPA is reviewing that plan now and will issue a supplemental proposal in early Spring.

CONTACTS FOR EACH AFFECTED AREA

Area	Technical Contact for details on proposal	Phone
Atlanta	Kay Prince	404-562-9026
Baltimore	Marcia Spink	215-814-2104
Houston	David Bary	214-665-2208
New York	Mary Mears	212-637-3669
Philadelphia	Marcia Spink	215-814-2104
Chicago	Jay Bortzer	312-886-1430
Milwaukee	Michael Leslie	312-353-6680
Western Mass. (Springfield)	Dave Conroy	617-918-1661
Greater Conn. (Hartford)	Dave Conroy	617-918-1661
Washington, D.C.	Marcia Spink	215-814-2104

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- ! To download copies of today's proposal, go to EPA's World Wide Web site at <http://www.epa.gov/airlinks> or <http://www.epa.gov/ttn/oarpg/ramain.html> .

- ! For general information about 1-hour attainment demonstrations, call Sharon Reinders at the EPA's Office of Air Quality Planning and Standards, 919-541-5284 or Tom Helms at 919-541-5527. For more information about proposed actions for specific areas, call the contact person listed in the table above.