

Air Quality and Transportation Conformity Highlights Summer 2013

*Prepared by the Office of Natural Environment
Federal Highway Administration*

Announcements and Recent Events

FHWA Released the 2008 ozone nonattainment maps. On March 27, 2008, EPA finalized new ozone standards which tightened the standard to 0.075 parts per million (ppm) from the previous, 1997 ozone standard of 0.08 ppm. On May 21, 2012, EPA finalized designations for this new ozone standard, effective July 20, 2012. The Office of Natural Environment prepared [maps of the 2008 ozone nonattainment areas](#). These maps depict the 2008 ozone nonattainment area boundary, the 1997 ozone nonattainment/maintenance area boundary, along with the metropolitan planning organization boundaries. Contact Karen Perritt at 202-366-9066 or Karen.Perritt@dot.gov with any questions.

PM Quantitative Hot-spot Example Added to Conformity Practices Website. The purpose of the site is to serve as an easily searchable repository of examples of transportation conformity documents and processes that can be replicated in other areas of the country. The site contains examples and information about PM hot-spot analyses, carbon monoxide (CO) screening protocols, interagency consultation and more. FHWA recently added an example of a PM_{2.5} quantitative hot-spot analysis to its [Examples of Transportation Conformity Practices website](#) and plans to add additional examples in the near future. Contact Emily Biondi at (202) 366-9482 or emily.biondi@dot.gov with any questions.

STAQS 2013 Virtual Meeting, September 23 and 24. This year's FHWA and EPA Southern Transportation and Air Quality Summit (STAQS) will be held on-line from [September 23, from 1 – 4 PM \(EST\)](#) (click for registration) to [September 24, from 10 AM – 1 PM \(EST\)](#) (click for registration). The Summit agenda includes Regulatory and Policy Updates, Climate Change and Sustainability, NEPA, Planning and Air Quality as well as presentations about State and Local Initiatives in Conformity/Emissions Reduction. Contact Mike Roberts at (404) 562-3928 or Michael.Roberts@dot.gov with any questions.

2014 Transportation/ Land Use Planning and Air Quality Conference. The Transportation Research Board Transportation and Air Quality Committee, the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) - Transportation & Development Institute (T&DI)'s Planning, Economics and Finance Committee, the Air and Waste Management Association (AWMA), and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and other sponsors are seeking papers for 20 sessions for the [2014 Transportation/ Land Use Planning and Air Quality \(TLUPAQ\) Conference](#). The spotlight theme in 2014 will be "Developing Healthy and Livable Communities". Contact Robert O'Loughlin at 415-744-3823, or robert.o'loughlin@dot.gov with questions.

Court backs EPA ozone limit but orders review of public welfare standard. July 23, 2013, the [Federal judges upheld](#) U.S. EPA's ozone national ambient air quality standard (NAAQS) in a

challenge from public health groups. The judges ruled that the agency was not required to adopt the CASAC recommendations. Further, the judges noted that it is the agency's call when there remains some scientific uncertainty. However, the judges sent the secondary ozone NAAQS back to U.S. EPA for review, saying that the agency could not simply set the secondary standard identical to the primary standard of 75 parts per billion without a determination of what level of protection was "requisite to protect the public welfare". Access the full ruling by clicking [here](#).

End of EMFAC2011 Grace Period. On March 6, 2013, EPA approved and announced the availability of EMFAC2011, the emissions estimation model for California. The announcement included a six-month grace period before the model is required for use in State Implementation Plan development and conformity analyses. After September 6, 2013, EMFAC2011 is the only approved motor vehicle emissions model for all new regional and CO, PM10 and PM2.5 hot-spot transportation conformity analyses across California. In general, this means that all new HC, NOX, PM10, PM2.5, and CO regional conformity analyses and CO, PM10 and PM2.5 hot-spot analyses started after the end of the 6-month grace period must be based on EMFAC2011. Conformity analyses begun before the end of the grace period may continue to use the previous version of EMFAC. The approval of this model has no effect on areas outside of California which use the MOVES emissions estimation model. For more information, see the [Federal Register Notice](#).

Reminders

FHWA Released Interim Guidance on CMAQ Operating Assistance Under MAP-21. On June 10 2013, FHWA released interim guidance that focused specifically on operating assistance under the CMAQ program and MAP-21. The interim guidance will give project sponsors the ability to spend 3 years of operating assistance over a 5 year period (extended from the current 3 years) while the total operating assistance would still be capped at a 3 year level. The interim guidance is available on FHWA's [MAP-21 website](#) and the [CMAQ website](#). Contact Mike Koontz at (202) 366-2076 or michael.koontz@dot.gov with any questions.

FHWA Released Annual Fiscal Tables. The FHWA Chief Financial Officer released the FY 2013 Supplementary Tables, providing detailed information on the year's apportionments covering all the major elements of the Federal-aid Highway Program. Of note to the transportation-environmental community, Table 13 breaks down the State-by-State apportionment of the CMAQ program, including the flexible funds available to minimum apportionment States, and the new priority set-aside created by MAP-21 for PM_{2.5} areas. The tables are available on the agency's [Legislation & Regulations](#) website.

MAP-21 Highlights on Agency Websites. Presentations, questions & answers, and other vital information surrounding the legislation remain on FHWA's web pages. Both the CMAQ webinar presented in September and the Qs&As can be found on the [MAP-21 website](#). Basic fiscal information is housed on the MAP-21 site as well, although the supplementary tables with more

detailed breakdowns on the individual Federal-aid programs are found on the agency's [Laws and Regulations](#) page.

FHWA Released 2008 8-Hour Ozone Frequently Asked Questions. On May 14, 2013, FHWA released a set of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) related to implementing the 2008 8-hour ozone NAAQS. These FAQs address when conformity applies to the metropolitan transportation plan and TIP and at the project level; transitioning from the 1997 to 2008 ozone standard for areas in nonattainment or maintenance for both; and how the planning process will be impacted by the transition to/from attainment. These FAQs were developed to respond to these and other questions we have received about the 2008 8-hour ozone NAAQS. These FAQs are available on [FHWA's website](#).

EPA Revised Particulate Matter Standard. On December 14, 2012, EPA finalized changes to the particulate matter (PM) national ambient air quality standards (NAAQS). EPA lowered the primary annual PM_{2.5} standard from 15 µg/m³ to 12 µg/m³. The 24-hour PM_{2.5} standards were retained at 35 µg/m³ as were the 24-hour PM₁₀ standard (150 µg/m³). EPA did not finalize the proposed new secondary standard intended to address visibility. EPA also took action to require near road monitors in areas with a population over 1 million (to be co-located with NO₂ near road monitors). EPA expects initial nonattainment designations in December 2014, effective early 2015. Areas will have five years to attain the standard (2020). Transportation conformity will be required in the newly designated nonattainment areas for the revised PM standards one year after the effective date of designations. For more information, visit [EPA's website](#).

EPA Released Guidance for Area Designations for the 2012 Annual PM_{2.5} NAAQS. On April 16, 2013, EPA issued [guidance](#) that provides information on the schedule and process for initially designating areas for the 2012 Annual PM_{2.5} NAAQS. Also included in the guidance are important factors that the EPA intends to evaluate in making final nonattainment area boundary decisions for this standard. Visit [EPA's Designation Guidance and Data website](#) for more information.

Training Opportunities

Air Quality Planning Web Course Available. The Air Quality Planning web-based training series is designed for transportation practitioners. It includes four modules: Clean Air Act Overview (FHWA-NHI-142068), State Implementation Plan (SIP) and Transportation Control Measure (TCM) Requirements and Policies (FHWA-NHI-142069), SIP Development Process (FHWA-NHI-142070) and Transportation Conformity (FHWA-NHI-142071). All courses are free. For more information, visit www.nhi.fhwa.dot.gov, search Air Quality Planning or look for the specific course number. Please contact Karen Perritt karen.perritt@dot.gov with any questions or comments.

Conformity 101 Training Available On-Line. FHWA made a short course entitled "What is Conformity?" available on-line. This course is intended for transportation and air quality practitioners who are new to transportation conformity, those looking for a refresher, or others

who only need a brief overview of the rule. The session is approximately 27 minutes long. Handouts are available for download at the same site. This course can be accessed on [FHWA's website](#).

MySQL Training for MOVES Model Users. Two training opportunities are available for MOVES model users. A three-hour webinar provides an introduction to MySQL Query Browser and MOVES interface. A six-hour training over two days will enable users to do MySQL programming and to write his/her own MySQL scripts and to manipulate MySQL databases including MOVES input and outputs. For more information or to schedule training, contact John Byun (Joon.Byun@dot.gov) or Paul Heishman (Paul.Heishman@dot.gov).

FHWA Resource Center Training Activities. FHWA's Resource Center Air Quality Technical Services Team is available to offer MOVES training, and information is available at the [Resource Center website](#).

EPA and DOT PM Hotspot Quantitative Analyses Training. EPA and DOT jointly developed a three-day training course on conducting quantitative PM hot-spot analysis using MOVES, and CAL3QHCR and AERMOD air quality dispersion models. Detailed information about this course and training materials and agenda can be found at: [PM Hotspot Quantitative Analyses Training](#).

EPA and FHWA Offer Two-Day MOVES2010 Training Course. EPA and FHWA jointly developed a two-day training course on the MOVES2010 model that will be taught at various locations over the coming months. This is a detailed, two-day, hands-on course geared toward state and local agency staff that will use MOVES2010 for developing SIPs and conformity analyses. For additional information on the two-day training sessions, visit [EPA's MOVES training website](#). The materials needed for the course are posted on the [MOVES training site](#).

Contacts

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Past issues are available on [FHWA's website](#). If you have any suggestions for future highlights, please email victoria.martinez@dot.gov.