

US EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT

## Fact Sheet

### CLEAN AIR INTERSTATE RULE (CAIR)

*Cleaner Air, Healthier Lives, and a Strong America*

On March 10, 2005, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced the Clean Air Interstate Rule (CAIR), a rule that will achieve the largest reduction in air pollution in more than a decade. This action, called the "Interstate Air Quality Rule" when it was proposed in January 2004, offers steep and sustained reductions in air pollution as well as dramatic health benefits at more than 25 times greater than the cost by 2015.

- Through the use of the proven cap and trade approach, CAIR achieves substantial reductions of sulfur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>) and nitrogen oxides (NO<sub>x</sub>) emissions and is a powerful component of the Administration's plan to help over 450 counties in the eastern U.S. meet EPA's protective air quality standards for ozone or fine particles.
- SO<sub>2</sub> and NO<sub>x</sub> contribute to the formation of fine particles and NO<sub>x</sub> contributes to the formation of ground-level ozone. Fine particles and ozone are associated with thousands of premature deaths and illnesses each year. Additionally, these pollutants reduce visibility and damage sensitive ecosystems.

By the year 2015, the Clean Air Interstate Rule will result in:

- nearly \$100 billion in annual health benefits, annually preventing 17,000 premature deaths, millions of lost work and school days, and tens of thousands of non-fatal heart attacks and hospital admissions.
- nearly \$2 billion in annual visibility benefits in southeastern national parks, such as Great Smokey and Shenandoah.
- significant regional reductions in sulfur and nitrogen deposition, reducing the number of acidic lakes and streams in the eastern U.S.
- CAIR covers 28 eastern states and the District of Columbia. In this rule, EPA finds that SO<sub>2</sub> and NO<sub>x</sub> emissions from 23 states and the District of Columbia contribute to unhealthy levels of fine particles in downwind states. In addition, NO<sub>x</sub> emissions in 25 eastern states and the District of Columbia contribute to unhealthy levels of 8-hour ozone in other downwind states. (See list of affected states below.)

Based on an assessment of the emissions contributing to interstate transport of air pollution and available control measures, EPA has determined that achieving required reductions in the identified states by controlling emissions from power plants is highly cost effective.

- States must achieve the required emission reductions using one of two compliance options: 1) meet the state's emission budget by requiring power plants to participate in an EPA-administered interstate cap and trade system that caps emissions in two stages, or 2) meet an individual state emissions budget through measures of the state's choosing.

- CAIR provides a Federal framework requiring states to reduce emissions of SO<sub>2</sub> and NO<sub>x</sub>. EPA anticipates that states will achieve this primarily by reducing emissions from the power generation sector. These reductions will be substantial and cost-effective, so in many areas, the reductions are large enough to meet the air quality standards. The Clean Air Act requires that states meet the new national, health-based air quality standards for ozone and PM<sub>2.5</sub> standards by requiring reductions from many types of sources. Some areas may need to take additional local actions. CAIR reductions will lessen the need for additional local controls.
- This final rule provides cleaner air while allowing for continued economic growth. By enabling states to address air pollutants from power plants in a cost effective fashion, this rule will protect public health and the environment without interfering with the steady flow of affordable energy for American consumers and businesses.
- If states choose to meet their emissions reductions requirements by controlling power plant emissions through an interstate cap and trade program, EPA's modeling shows that:
  - In 2010, CAIR will reduce SO<sub>2</sub> emissions by 4.3 million tons -- 45% lower than 2003 levels, across states covered by the rule. By 2015, CAIR will reduce SO<sub>2</sub> emissions by 5.4 million tons, or 57%, from 2003 levels in these states. At full implementation, CAIR will reduce power plant SO<sub>2</sub> emissions in affected states to just 2.5 million tons, 73% below 2003 emissions levels.
  - CAIR also will achieve significant NO<sub>x</sub> reductions across states covered by the rule. In 2009, CAIR will reduce NO<sub>x</sub> emissions by 1.7 million tons or 53% from 2003 levels. In 2015, CAIR will reduce power plant NO<sub>x</sub> emissions by 2 million tons, achieving a regional emissions level of 1.3 million tons, a 61% reduction from 2003 levels.
  - In 1990, national SO<sub>2</sub> emissions from power plants were 15.7 million tons compared to 3.5 million tons that will be achieved with CAIR. In 1990, national NO<sub>x</sub> emissions from power plants were 6.7 million tons, compared to 2.2 million tons that will be achieved with CAIR.
- In upcoming but closely related action, EPA will impose the first ever federally-mandated requirements that coal-fired electric utilities reduce their emissions of mercury. Together the Clean Air Mercury Rule and the Clean Air Interstate Rule create a multi-pollutant strategy to reduce emissions throughout the United States.
- The Bush Administration continues to believe that the President's Clear Skies legislation is a more efficient, effective, long-term mechanism to achieve large-scale national reductions. Clear Skies legislation applies nationwide and is modeled on the highly successful Acid Rain Program. The Agency remains committed to working with Congress to pass legislation.

## Coverage of the Clean Air Interstate Rule

States listed are required to control for both fine particle pollution and ozone transport unless otherwise noted

Alabama	Mississippi
Arkansas (ozone only)	Missouri
Connecticut (ozone only)	New York
Florida	New Jersey (ozone only)
Delaware (ozone only)	North Carolina
Georgia (fine particle pollution only)	Ohio
Illinois	Pennsylvania
Indiana	South Carolina
Iowa	Tennessee
Kentucky	Texas (fine particle pollution only)
Louisiana	Virginia
Maryland	West Virginia
Massachusetts (ozone only)	Wisconsin
Michigan	District of Columbia
Minnesota (fine particle pollution only)	

### **For More Information**

For information on the Clean Air Interstate Rule, visit [www.epa.gov/cair](http://www.epa.gov/cair)