

US EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT

Fact Sheet

Supplemental Proposed Rulemaking on 8-Hour Ozone Redesignations for Various Areas in Michigan, Ohio and West Virginia - Proposal

Action

- On March 16, 2007, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) issued a supplemental proposed rulemaking that would affect 18 areas in Michigan, Ohio, and West Virginia. In April 2004, effective June, 2004, EPA identified or designated these areas as “nonattainment” because their air quality did not meet the National Ambient Air Quality Standards for ground-level ozone.
- Air quality in these areas has improved sufficiently to meet the ground-level ozone standards. The states where these areas are located began working with EPA to “redesignate” the 18 areas to “attainment”. As part of this process, the states were required to show that each area can continue to maintain the standard. The 18 areas are:

Parkersburg-Marietta, OH-WV (2 parts)	Grand Rapids, MI
Steubenville-Weirton, OH-WV (2 parts)	Huron County, MI
Wheeling, OH-WV (2 parts)	Kalamazoo-Battle Creek, MI
Canton-Massillon, OH	Lansing-East Lansing, MI
Lima, OH	Mason County, MI
Flint, MI	Muskegon, MI
Benton Harbor, MI	Cass County, MI,
Benzie County, MI	
- After reviewing the states’ requests, EPA proposed to redesignate each of the areas to attainment. These proposals have not been finalized. Further action has been pending the Agency’s review of the December 22, 2006, decision of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit that vacated EPA’s Phase 1 rule implementing the 8-hour ozone standard.
- EPA believes that final action on these redesignation proposals is appropriate under the relevant provisions of the Clean Air Act and longstanding policies regarding redesignation requests.
- In this supplemental proposal, EPA is requesting comment on its belief that the Court’s ruling does not alter the requirements relevant to these proposed redesignations so as to prevent redesignation, and that the Agency may move forward to finalize them.
- EPA will accept comment on this supplemental proposal for 15 days from the date of publication in the Federal Register.

Background

- EPA issued the 8-hour ozone standard in July 1997, based on information demonstrating that the 1-hour standard was inadequate for protecting public health. Scientific information shows that ozone can affect human health at lower levels, and over longer exposure times than one hour
- Ground-level ozone forms when emissions of nitrogen oxides (NO_x) and volatile organic compounds (VOCs) "cook" in the sun. Sources of these pollutants include cars and trucks, power plants, refineries and other large industrial facilities, and some natural sources.
- Breathing ozone can irritate air passages, reduce lung function, aggravate asthma, and inflame and damage the cells lining the lungs. It also may aggravate chronic lung diseases like emphysema and bronchitis, may reduce the immune system's ability to fight off bacterial infections in the respiratory system and may cause permanent lung damage.
- The 8-hour ozone standard is 0.08 parts per million (ppm), averaged over eight hours. The 1-hour standard is 0.12 ppm, measured in hourly readings.
- EPA designated 8-hour ozone nonattainment areas in April, 2004, effective in June, 2004.. At the same time, the Agency issued the Phase 1 Ozone Implementation Rule which addresses key implementation issues such as classifications for the 8-hour standard and transition from the 1-hour to the 8-hour standard, including revocation of the 1-hour standard.
- On December 22, 2006, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit vacated EPA's Phase 1 Implementation Rule for the 8-hour ozone standard.

For Further Information

- This proposed rule may be found at EPA's website at <http://www.epa.gov/oar/oaqps/glo/designations/>.
- In addition to this supplemental proposal, other background information is available at www.regulations.gov or in hardcopy at:
EPA's Air and Radiation Docket and Information Center, Environmental Protection Agency, Room 3334,
1301 Constitution Avenue, NW,
Washington, DC.

The Public Reading Room is open from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, excluding legal holidays. The telephone number for the Public Reading Room is (202) 566-1744. The number for the Air and Radiation Docket and

Information Center is (202) 566-1742.

HOW TO COMMENT:

- Comments should be identified by Docket ID No. OAR-2007-0170 and submitted by one of the following methods:
 - Federal eRulemaking Portal (<http://www.regulations.gov>),
 - e-mail (a-and-r-docket@epa.gov),
 - Mail (EPA Docket Center, Environmental Protection Agency, Mailcode 6102T, 1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20460), or
 - Hand delivery (EPA Docket Center, Environmental Protection Agency, Room 3334, 1301 Constitution Avenue, NW, Washington, DC).
- For further information concerning this action, contact Mr. Butch Stackhouse of EPA's Office of Air Quality Planning and Standards at (919) 541-5208.