

US EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
REGION 2  
290 BROADWAY  
NEW YORK, NY 10007-1866

DEC - 8 2011

Honorable John P. deJongh Jr.  
Office of the Governor  
Governor House  
21-22 Kongens Gade  
Charlotte Amalie  
St. Thomas, Virgin Islands 00802

Dear Governor deJongh:

Thank you for your recommendations dated February 3, 2009 on air quality designations for the revised 2008 National Ambient Air Quality Standards for ozone throughout the Virgin Islands. I appreciate the information you shared with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) as we move forward to improve ozone air quality. This letter is to notify you that EPA's preliminary response to your recommendations is to approve your request for the Virgin Islands to be declared attainment of the 2008 ozone standard, and to inform you of our approach for completing the designations.

On March 12, 2008, the EPA revised its national ambient air quality standards for ground-level ozone to provide increased protection of public health and the environment. The EPA lowered the primary 8-hour ozone standard from 0.08 parts per million (ppm) to 0.075 ppm to protect against health effects associated with ozone exposure, including a range of serious respiratory illnesses and increased premature death from heart or lung disease. The EPA revised the secondary 8-hour ozone standard, making it identical to the primary standard, to protect against welfare effects, including impacts on sensitive vegetation and forested ecosystems.

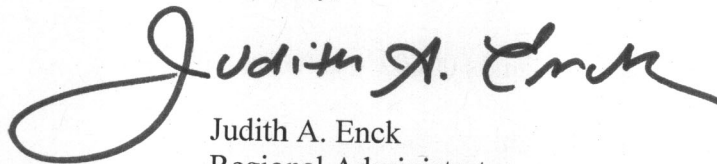
As required by the Clean Air Act, the EPA will designate an area as nonattainment if it is violating the 2008 ozone standards or contributing to a violation of the standards in a nearby area. Consistent with designations for previous ozone standards, the EPA intends to designate an area as unclassifiable/attainment if there are certified, quality-assured air quality monitoring data showing the area is meeting the ozone standards. The EPA also intends to designate areas as unclassifiable/attainment if there are no monitoring data for the area, and the EPA has not made a determination that the area is contributing to a violation in a nearby area.

After considering the Virgin Islands' February 3, 2009 ozone designation recommendations and other relevant technical information, including the most recent air quality data available from the Virgin Islands, the EPA intends to designate all of the United States Virgin Islands as "unclassifiable/attainment." If the Virgin Islands Government has additional information that you would like the EPA to consider, please submit it to us by February 29, 2012. The EPA will

also make its preliminary designation decisions and supporting documentation available to the general public for review and comment. We will be announcing a 30-day public comment period shortly in the *Federal Register*. After considering additional information we receive, the EPA plans to promulgate final ozone designations in spring of 2012.

We look forward to a continued dialogue with you and your staff as we work together to implement the 2008 ozone standards. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me, or have your staff contact Raymond Werner, Chief of the Air Programs Branch, at 212 637-3706.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Judith A. Enck". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J" and a long, sweeping underline.

Judith A. Enck  
Regional Administrator

cc: Alicia V. Barnes, Commissioner  
Virgin Islands Department of Planning & Natural Resources  
David Simon, Director  
Virgin Islands Department of Planning & Natural Resources  
Gina McCarthy, Assistant Administrator for Air and Radiation  
Steve Page, Director, Office of Air Quality Planning and Standards