

US EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT



EPA'S CLEAN POWER PLAN

RESOURCES FOR COMMUNITIES

On August 3, President Obama and EPA announced the Clean Power Plan – a historic and important step in reducing carbon pollution from power plants that takes real action on climate change. Shaped by years of unprecedented outreach and public engagement, the final Clean Power Plan is fair, flexible and designed to strengthen the fast-growing trend toward cleaner and lower-polluting American energy. With strong but achievable standards for power plants, and customized goals for states to cut the carbon pollution that is driving climate change, the Clean Power Plan provides national consistency, accountability and a level playing field while reflecting each state's energy mix. It also shows the world that the United States is committed to leading global efforts to address climate change.

CLIMATE CHANGE PUTS VULNERABLE COMMUNITIES AT RISK

Carbon pollution threatens the health, economic well-being and quality of life of Americans across the country, and especially the most vulnerable among us – including children, older adults, people with heart or lung disease, and people living in poverty. Heat waves, air quality, and extreme weather are all climate change related issues that disproportionately affect minority and low income communities. We are already seeing an increase in temperatures, extreme weather events, drought, flooding, and sea level rise in areas across the United States, and these impacts are expected to get worse as carbon pollution in our atmosphere increases.

The Clean Power Plan and related actions will provide broad benefits to communities—particularly vulnerable communities – across the nation by reducing carbon pollution from power plants, the largest source of carbon pollution in the U.S. It will cut hundreds of millions of tons of carbon pollution and hundreds of thousands of tons of harmful soot- and smog-forming particle pollution that makes people sick.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT WILL CONTINUE

Public engagement was essential throughout the development of the Clean Power Plan. EPA will continue to engage with all stakeholders, including low-income, minority and tribal communities throughout the rule's implementation. In addition, to ensure communities – particularly low-income, minority and tribal communities – continue to have opportunities to participate in decision-making, EPA is requiring that states demonstrate that they have engaged

with the public, including communities, in the formulation of their final state plans developed for the Clean Power Plan.

The requirement for meaningful engagement within state plans will provide an avenue for all communities to both hear from the state about strategies that might work best to tackle climate pollution, and to provide input on where possible impacts to low-income, minority and tribal communities could occur along with strategies to mitigate those impacts. It will also be useful for states to have a better understanding of how their plans may impact communities.

The final rule includes information on communities living near power plants, and EPA will provide additional information to facilitate engagement between communities and states as implementation of the Clean Power Plan moves forward. For example, the agency will provide guidance on strategies states can use to meaningfully engage with communities, along with other resources and information, on a portal web page the agency will develop for communities' use.

EPA IS COMMITTED TO HELPING COMMUNITIES BENEFIT FROM CLEAN ENERGY

The Clean Power Plan gives states the opportunity to ensure that communities share in the benefits of a clean energy economy, including energy efficiency and renewable energy.

EPA is creating a Clean Energy Incentive Program (CEIP) to reward early investments in wind and solar generation, as well as demand-side energy efficiency programs implemented in low-income communities, that deliver results during 2020 and/or 2021. Through this program, EPA intends to make allowances or emission rate credits (ERCs) available to states that incentivize these investments. EPA is providing additional incentives to encourage energy efficiency investments in low-income communities.

EPA will encourage states to work with communities to include programs that will bring clean energy resources to communities as part of their state plans, and will provide examples of successful model programs. The agency will develop a catalog of state and local programs that have successfully delivered energy efficiency benefits to low-income communities. These programs can serve as models to inform states as they work with communities to develop their Clean Power Plan compliance strategies and plans.

EPA also will provide communities and states information on how to access existing financial and technical assistance programs that can help communities increase use of energy efficiency and renewable energy programs. These include federal programs and resources, such as: the National Community Solar Partnership, which the White House announced last month, to increase access to solar for all Americans, particularly low- and moderate- income communities; and the Clean Energy Impact Investment Center, which the Department of Energy will launch to make information about energy and climate programs at DOE and other government agencies accessible and more understandable to the public. In addition, the Administration's POWER+

Plan will invest in workers and jobs, address important legacy costs in coal country and drive the development of coal technology as our country moves to a clean energy economy.

UNDERSTANDING LOCAL IMPACTS WILL BE IMPORTANT

As implementation of the Clean Power Plan goes forward, the agency will conduct air quality evaluations to determine impacts that state plans may have on vulnerable communities. EPA encourages states to conduct analyses to help states, communities and utilities understand the potential localized and community impacts of state plans.

To help with these analyses, EPA will ensure emissions data is available and easily accessed through the Clean Power Plan Communities web page. The agency also will provide demographic information and other data, along with examples analyses that states have conducted to assess the impact of other rules, via the web page.