

US EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

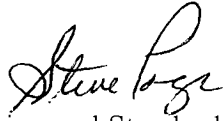
RESEARCH TRIANGLE PARK, NC 27711

MAY 18 2006

OFFICE OF
AIR QUALITY PLANNING
AND STANDARDS

MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: Supporting Innovative Strategies to Keep Communities' Air Clean 8-Hour Ozone Flex (8-O₃ Flex) Program

FROM: Stephen D. Page, Director 
Office of Air Quality Planning and Standards

TO: Regional Administrators, Regions I-X

In continuing the Agency's commitment to work cooperatively with State, Tribal and local governments, I am pleased to announce the 8-Hour Ozone Flex (8-O₃ Flex) program. The 8-O₃ Flex program is a voluntary agreement between the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), State, Tribal, and local communities to encourage 8-hour ozone attainment areas nationwide to reduce ozone emissions so they can continue to meet the National Ambient Air Quality Standard (NAAQS) for ozone. This program will support and reward innovative, voluntary, local strategies to reduce ground-level ozone, thereby improving air quality and helping areas maintain attainment. In addition, the program will allow States and locals to receive "credit" for these efforts in the State/Tribal Implementation Plans, and help them to avoid a violation of the 8-hour ozone standard. Through the 8-O₃ Flex program, we are encouraging communities to make decisions that will improve air quality.

With this memorandum, I am transmitting to you the guidelines for the 8-O₃ Flex program, and request that you and your staff work with States, Tribes, and local agencies that may wish to take advantage of this opportunity. This program was a natural outgrowth of previous programs including the Flexible Attainment Region (FAR) and the 1-Hour Ozone Flex program. The purpose of the 8-O₃ Flex guidance is to provide a structure and framework for local actions to reduce ozone emissions and thus maintain the 8-hour ozone NAAQS. It also provides a means for local communities to take the initiative in maintaining and improving their air quality.

The 8-O₃ Flex program will be implemented through an intergovernmental agreement (Memorandum of Agreement) between EPA, the State/Tribe, and the local community. Areas eligible to participate in the 8-O₃ Flex program are those designated as attainment or unclassifiable/attainment for the 8-hour ozone standard, as published on April 30, 2004, (69 FR 23858) and not designated nonattainment for the 1-hour ozone NAAQS or with an approved 1-

hour ozone maintenance plan. In addition, the areas cannot have been redesignated to nonattainment of the 8-hour ozone standard, their current design values must show attainment of the 8-hour ozone standard, and they must have air monitors in place that meet state implementation plan requirements.

I would like to thank Region 6 for taking the lead in developing this guidance. If you have any questions on the 8-O₃ Flex Program, you may contact Barbara Driscoll of my staff at (919) 541-1051, or Carrie Paige, EPA Region 6 at (214) 665-6521.

Attachment

cc: Regional Air Division Directors, Regions I-X
Leah Weiss, NESCAUM
John Paul, ALAPCO
Eddie Terrill, STAPPA
Bill Becker, STAPPA/ALAPCO
Janice Nolan, American Lung Association