



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION III
1650 Arch Street
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19103-2029

DEC 3 2003

The Honorable Anthony A. Williams
Mayor, District of Columbia
John A. Wilson Bldg., Suite 209
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20004

Dear Mayor Williams:

Thank you for making recommendations on 8-hour ozone air quality designations. Your letter is an important step in providing the citizens of the District of Columbia with information on air pollution levels where they live and work. Levels of ground-level ozone, a major constituent of smog, have improved significantly since the Clean Air Act (CAA) was amended in 1990, at which time 135 areas were designated as not attaining the 1-hour ozone standard. Since that time nearly half those areas (67) have cleaned up their air to meet the 1-hour ozone standard and have been redesignated as attaining that standard. However, many areas still have not met the less stringent 1-hour ozone standard and, in 1997, the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) promulgated a more stringent 8-hour ozone national ambient air quality standard. Thus, much work remains to be done. Under the CAA, EPA is required to promulgate designations for new or revised standards, such as the 8-hour ozone standard. Earlier this year, after several public interest groups filed a lawsuit claiming EPA had not met the statutory deadline for designating areas for the 8-hour ozone standard, we entered into a consent decree that requires us to promulgate designations by April 15, 2004.

We have reviewed your July 15, 2003 letter submitting the District of Columbia recommendation on air quality designations for the 8-hour ozone standard. This letter is to inform you that the EPA does not intend to make modifications to your recommended designations. We will continue to work with your office as we move forward to make final designations.

The CAA defines a nonattainment area as any area that does not meet (or that contributes to ambient air quality in a nearby area that does not meet) the national primary or secondary ambient air quality standard for the pollutant. EPA guidance indicates that the District of Columbia should use the larger of the Consolidated Metropolitan Statistical Area, Metropolitan Statistical Area, or the 1-hour ozone nonattainment area as the presumptive boundary for 8-hour ozone nonattainment areas. We have reviewed your submission and believe it is consistent with our guidance.

EPA has been tracking 2003 ozone monitoring data and their impact on areas' 2001-2003 design values. EPA will continue to closely review monitoring data for differences that may

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occur throughout the remainder of the 2003 ozone season or as a result of data handling procedures to determine if it might affect the State's recommended designation. It is critical for the District of Columbia to expedite the submittal of 2003 data to EPA in order to accurately reflect an area's air quality because it is the basis for the designation and classification process. To advance the designation and classification process, please submit by December 30, 2003 your final 2003 monitoring data into the Air Quality System and, in addition, submit it to Judith M. Katz, Director, Air Protection Division by official letter by February 6, 2004 so that we can place it in the docket for the designations rulemaking.

We look forward to a continued dialog with the District of Columbia as we work to finalize the designations for the 8-hour ozone standard. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me or Judith M. Katz, Director, Air Protection Division at 215-814-2654.

Sincerely,



Donald S. Welsh
Regional Administrator

Enclosure

cc (w/enclosure):

Theodore Gordon, Senior Deputy Director, DC Dept. of Health
Donald Wambsgans, Program Manager, Air Quality Division
Thomas Snyder, ARMA Director, MDE
John M. Daniels, Jr., Director of Air Program, VADEQ

Enclosure 1

The following table identifies the area within the District of Columbia that EPA intends to designate as nonattainment. This is consistent with the District of Columbia's recommendations of July 15, 2003.

Area	District of Columbia Recommended Nonattainment Counties	EPA Recommended Nonattainment Counties
Washington, DC-MD-VA	District of Columbia	District of Columbia