

US EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) today announced it has reopened the comment period to allow the public additional time to comment on a proposed rule regarding the Section 126 petitions filed by northeastern states seeking to reduce ozone transport across state boundaries. The comment period on the proposal now will close August 25.

The proposed rule, published in the Federal Register June 24 (64 FR 33962), would amend two aspects of the April 30, 1999 rule on the Section 126 petitions:

- ! First, EPA is proposing to remove the automatic trigger mechanism, which is based on the NOx SIP call deadlines, for granting or denying the section 126 petitions from the eight northeastern states. EPA is proposing instead to simply grant the technically approvable portions of the petitions, based on the finding that NOx emissions from certain stationary sources in particular states significantly contribute to ozone nonattainment problems in the petitioning state.
- ! Second, EPA is proposing to indefinitely stay the affirmative technical determinations based on the 8-hour ozone standard, pending further developments in the litigation of the national ambient air quality standards for ozone.

EPA plans to finalize action on these proposed changes by the end of this year. EPA is not reopening the comment period on other aspects of the Section 126 petitions.