

EPA'S TOOLS FOR CLEAN AIR *WORKING TO HELP YOU BREATHE EASIER, LIVE LONGER*

Even as new scientific information is being developed, EPA is moving forward with an aggressive regulatory program to control PM_{2.5}:

Interstate Pollution

In the January 30, 2004, *Federal Register*, EPA proposed new air rules for reducing emissions of sulfur dioxide (SO₂), nitrogen oxides (NO_x) - the two most significant precursors to PM_{2.5}. The Clean Air Interstate Rule (CAIR) focuses on states whose SO₂ and NO_x emissions are significantly contributing to fine particle problems in other downwind states. This proposal would result in the deepest cuts in sulfur dioxide (SO₂) and nitrogen oxides (NO_x) emissions in more than a decade.

- As proposed, CAIR would reduce emissions of SO₂ and NO_x in 29 eastern states and the District of Columbia in two phases.
- SO₂ emissions would be reduced by 3.6 million tons in 2010 (approximately 40 percent below current levels) and by another 2 million tons per year when the rules are fully implemented (approximately 70 percent below current levels).
- NO_x emissions would be cut by 1.5 million tons in 2010 and 1.8 million tons annually in 2015 (about 65 percent below today's levels).
- Each affected state would be required to revise its state implementation plan to include control measures to meet specific statewide emission reduction requirements.
- To achieve the required reductions in the most cost effective way, the proposal suggests that states regulate power plants under a cap and trade program similar to EPA's highly successful Acid Rain Program. Emissions would be permanently capped and could not increase.
- EPA intends to finalize CAIR in the fall of this year.

Local Pollution

The Clean Air Act requires state, local and tribal governments to take steps to attain the National Ambient Air Quality Standards for PM_{2.5}. These steps may include stricter controls on industrial facilities, and additional planning requirements for transportation sources.

- In mid-February 2004, states and tribes recommended PM_{2.5} designations to EPA for areas to be designated as "nonattainment." Nonattainment areas are those areas with air quality levels exceeding the standards, plus nearby areas contributing to such violations. EPA revised these recommendations and proposed nonattainment designations on June 28 and 29.

Five Years of Progress

- In November, EPA will make final attainment and nonattainment designations. At that point, many areas across the country will need to take action to improve their air quality.
- Areas that will be designated attainment will have monitored air quality that meets the level of EPA's health based national air quality standards for fine particle pollution. While these areas will not have to take steps to improve air quality they must prevent their air quality from deteriorating.
- State, local and tribal governments must detail these control requirements in plans demonstrating how they will meet the PM_{2.5} national air quality standard. Those plans are known as state or tribal implementation plans, or SIPs/TIPs. States and tribes must submit their plans to EPA within three years after the Agency makes final designations (by February 2008).
- In order to facilitate the submission of adequate state plans, EPA will propose an Implementation Rule later this year that will specify the requirements that states must meet in their SIPs. This rule will be finalized in the spring of 2005.

Control of Diesel Pollution

- On May 10, 2004, the Bush Administration announced one of the most dramatic advancements in clean air protection since passage of the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990. EPA's Clean Air Nonroad Diesel Rule requires stringent pollution controls on diesel engines used in industries such as construction, agriculture and mining, and it will slash sulfur content of diesel fuel. The rule will be a major help to areas nationwide in their effort to reach the PM_{2.5} standards.
- The new standards will cut emissions from nonroad diesel engines by over 90 percent. Over 650,000 pieces of nonroad diesel equipment sold in the United States each year will be covered by this rulemaking. Currently about six million pieces of nonroad diesel equipment are in use in the United States. The rule will begin reducing emissions in 2008. Based on average expected equipment lifetime, the entire inventory should be upgraded by 2030.
- Environmental benefits when the full inventory of older nonroad engines has been replaced include:
 - NO_x will be reduced by 738,000 tons annually
 - PM will be reduced by 129,000 tons annually