

FACT SHEET
IMPLEMENTATION GUIDANCE FOR THE PRIMARY NATIONAL AMBIENT AIR
QUALITY STANDARD for SULFUR DIOXIDE

SUMMARY OF ACTION

- On September 21, 2011, EPA asked for public comment on our draft guidance to states about how to implement the primary National Ambient Air Quality Standard (NAAQS) for sulfur dioxide (SO₂). EPA posted this Notice of Availability on our website and it will appear in the *Federal Register*.
- On June 2, 2010, EPA strengthened the primary SO₂ NAAQS. The revised standard is intended to improve public health protection, especially for people with asthma, children and the elderly. In the final SO₂ NAAQS rulemaking, EPA provided initial thinking on how states and emission sources should implement the new 1-hour SO₂ NAAQS.
- As EPA indicated it would in the final rulemaking, the agency is providing additional guidance to the states about the process and requirements related to the Clean Air Act's section 110(a)(1) maintenance submittal. And, EPA noted that we would offer states additional guidance related to the air quality modeling needed to comply with the new 1-hour SO₂ NAAQS. This action fulfills our commitment to provide the public an opportunity to comment on this additional guidance.
- Today's Notice of Availability provides an opportunity for the public to comment on the draft "Guidance for 1-Hour SO₂ SIP Submissions". We are offering the public 30 days to review and provide comment on the draft guidance. Following the comment period, EPA will revise the document as appropriate and finalize it for release.

APPROACH TO IMPLEMENTING THE 2010 1- HOUR SO₂ STANDARD

- For implementation of the 1-hour SO₂ NAAQS, refined dispersion modeling should be used to determine if areas with sources that have the potential to cause or contribute to a violation of the new SO₂ NAAQS can attain the standard. Dispersion modeling relies on computer programs to simulate how air pollutants disperse in the atmosphere. It is used to estimate the downwind concentration of air pollutants from sources such as industrial plants or highways.
- The Clean Air Act establishes a process by which states and EPA have roles in determining which areas meet or do not meet a NAAQS; this process is known as "designating" areas as "attainment," "nonattainment" or "unclassifiable." EPA intends to complete SO₂ designations by June 2012.
- EPA anticipates initially designating areas with 2008-2010 monitoring data or refined dispersion modeling results showing a violation of the NAAQS as nonattainment. Areas that have both monitoring data and refined modeling results showing no violations will be

designated as attainment. All other areas, including those with SO₂ monitors showing no violations but without refined modeling showing no violations, will be designated as unclassifiable. Areas with no SO₂ monitors will be designated as unclassifiable as well.

- States with areas designated nonattainment in 2012 must submit plans to EPA outlining actions they will take to meet the SO₂ standards 18 months from the effective date of designations or by February 2014. SO₂ nonattainment areas must attain the standard by August 2017.
- States with areas designated “unclassifiable” must submit plans to EPA by June 2013 - 3 years following the promulgation of the new SO₂ NAAQS. These state plans must:
 - demonstrate, through refined air quality modeling, that all sources contributing to monitored and modeled violations of the new standard, or that have the potential to cause or contribute to a violation, will be sufficiently controlled to ensure timely attainment and maintenance of the new SO₂ NAAQS; and
 - include enforceable emissions limitations, timetables for compliance, and appropriate testing/reporting to assure compliance.
 - While these plans do not include a maximum deadline by which states are required to meet the standard, EPA believes that unclassifiable areas should show that they have attained the standard and are going to be able to maintain SO₂ levels in the outdoor air below the standard by August 2017, the same deadline that would be required for areas designated nonattainment.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- To download a copy of the draft implementation guidance for the 1-hour SO₂ NAAQS, go to EPA’s Web site at: <http://www.epa.gov/airquality/sulfurdioxide/implement.html>.
- Today’s Notice of Availability and other associated information are available either electronically at <http://www.regulations.gov>, EPA’s electronic public docket and comment system, or in hardcopy at the EPA Docket Center’s Public Reading Room. (Docket ID No. EPA-HQ-OAR-2010-1059)
- The Public Reading Room is located in the EPA Headquarters, Room Number 3334 in the EPA West Building, located at 1301 Constitution Avenue, NW, Washington, DC. Hours of operation are 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. eastern standard time, Monday through Friday, excluding Federal holidays.
- Visitors are required to show photographic identification, pass through a metal detector, and sign the EPA visitor log. All visitor materials will be processed through an X-ray machine as well. Visitors will be provided a badge that must be visible at all times.