



**UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION 8**

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AUG 18 2008

Ref: 8P-AR

The Honorable John Hoeven
Governor of North Dakota
600 E. Boulevard Avenue – Dept. 101
Bismarck, ND 58505-0001

Dear Governor Hoeven:

Thank you for your recommendations on the status of fine particle pollution throughout North Dakota.

We have reviewed the November 27, 2007 letter from you submitting North Dakota's recommendations on air quality designations for the 2006 24-hour PM_{2.5} standards. We have also reviewed the technical information submitted to support North Dakota's recommendations. We appreciate the effort your State has made to develop this supporting information. Consistent with the Clean Air Act, this letter is to inform you that the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) agrees that your entire State is in attainment at this time. This means that across your State, all areas meet the 2006 24-hour PM_{2.5} standards. This is truly good news for the residents of North Dakota.

Fine-particle pollution represents one of the most significant barriers to clean air facing our nation today. Health studies link these tiny particles – about 1/30th the diameter of a human hair – to serious human health problems including aggravated asthma, increased respiratory symptoms like coughing and difficult or painful breathing, chronic bronchitis, decreased lung function, and even premature death in people with heart and lung disease. Fine particle pollution can remain suspended in the air for long periods of time and create public health problems far away from emission sources. Reducing levels of fine-particle PM_{2.5} pollution is an important part of our nation's commitment to clean, healthy air.

We intend to make final designation decisions for the 2006 24-hour PM_{2.5} standards by December 18, 2008. Please also be aware that in the near future, EPA is planning to publish a notice in the Federal Register to solicit public comments on our intended designation decisions.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me, or your staff may call Catherine Roberts, Particulate Matter Program Coordinator at 303-312-6025. We look forward to a continued dialogue with you as we work together to implement the PM_{2.5} standards.

Sincerely,



Carol Rushin
Acting Regional Administrator

cc: L. Dave Glatt, Chief, Environmental Health Section, Department of Health
Terry O'Clair, Director, Division of Air Quality

