



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

REGION VII  
901 NORTH 5TH STREET  
KANSAS CITY, KANSAS 66101

The Honorable Mike Johanns  
Governor of Nebraska  
Office of the Governor  
P.O. Box 94848  
Lincoln, NE 68509-4848

28 JUN 2004

OFFICE OF  
THE REGIONAL ADMINISTRATOR

Dear Governor Johanns:

Fine-particle pollution represents one of the most significant barriers to clean air facing our nation today. These tiny particles – about 1/30<sup>th</sup> the diameter of a human hair – have been scientifically linked to serious human health problems. Their ability to be suspended in air for long periods of time makes them a public health threat far beyond the source of emissions. An important part of our nation's commitment to clean, healthy air deals with reducing levels of this fine-particle or PM2.5 pollution.

In February, your state submitted its recommended boundaries for PM2.5 attainment and nonattainment areas. After a thorough review of your recommendations, EPA agrees that your entire state is in attainment at this time. This means that across your state, all areas meet the more protective, health-based fine-particle standard. That is truly good news for the residents of your state.

We challenge you to not only maintain, but also continue the progress you have made toward clean air. It is a commitment to no backsliding in the clean air status for fine particles that your state has achieved. You will hear from us again in November when EPA makes its final decisions on PM2.5 designations determining those areas that meet or do not meet the fine particle standards.

The Bush Administration has made the reduction of fine particle pollution a critical element of a comprehensive national clean air strategy. This strategy includes EPA's recent rule to reduce pollution from nonroad diesel engines, and the proposed rule to reduce pollution from power plants in the eastern U.S. These two rules are important components of EPA's efforts to help states and localities meet the more protective national fine-particle and 8-hour ozone air quality standards. Together these rules will help all areas of the country achieve cleaner air.

We look forward to a continued dialogue with you as we work together to implement the PM2.5 standards. Should you or your staff have any questions, I invite you to contact William Spratlin, Director, Air, RCRA, and Toxics Division at 913-551-7401. Again, we congratulate you on the clean air fine particle status that your state has achieved.

Sincerely,

James Gulliford  
Regional Administrator

cc: Mr. Mike Linder, Director  
Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality  
Ms. Shelley Kaderly, Administrator, Air Quality Division  
Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality