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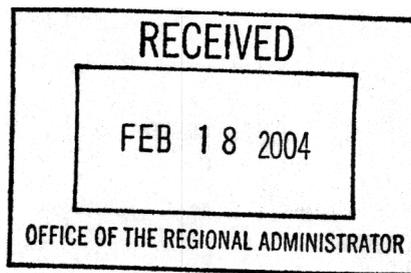
State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations

State House  
Providence, Rhode Island 02903-1196  
401-222-2080

Donald L. Carcieri  
Governor

February 11, 2004

Mr. Robert Varney  
Regional Administrator  
EPA – New England, Region I  
1 Congress Street, Suite 1100  
Boston, MA 02114-2023



Dear Administrator Varney:

Pursuant to the requirements of Section 107(d)(1) of the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990, Rhode Island is hereby recommending that the State be classified as in attainment of the National Ambient Air Quality Standard (NAAQS) for fine particulate matter (PM<sub>2.5</sub>), which was promulgated in 1997. Staff in the Department of Environmental Management have reviewed air quality monitoring data collected throughout the State and compared the levels found to the NAAQS for PM<sub>2.5</sub>. This review has shown that Rhode Island is in attainment of the standard.

Specifically, PM<sub>2.5</sub> was monitored at a total of eight sites in Rhode Island during the period 2000 – 2002 and was monitored for that entire period at five of those sites. The results of these monitoring events were compared to the NAAQS standard of 15 µg/m<sup>3</sup> as the annual arithmetic mean, averaged over a three-year period, and 65 µg/m<sup>3</sup> as the 98<sup>th</sup> percentile of 24-hour concentrations, averaged over three years. The average annual mean and 98<sup>th</sup> percentile 24-hour concentrations recorded at each of the five sites during that period, in µg/m<sup>3</sup>, were as follows:

	Providence	E Providence	Narragansett	W Greenwich	Chepachet	NAAQS
Annual Mean	11.2	10.9	8.8	8.9	9.8	15
98 <sup>th</sup> Percentile 24-Hour	30.1	29.5	24.9	25.5	24.4	65

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Staff verified that the annual and 24-hour concentrations for all five of the sites are considerably below the PM<sub>2.5</sub> NAAQS. Based on preliminary reviews of the 2003 data, it appears that the concentrations for the 2001 – 2003 period will similarly be below the NAAQS. Please accept these data as the basis for my recommendation that the entire State of Rhode Island be classified as an attainment area for the PM<sub>2.5</sub> NAAQS.

As a final note, although Rhode Island's air quality does not violate the promulgated standard, levels of that pollutant are at times high enough to cause increased risk for some individuals in the State. EPA's Air Quality Index classifies daily average concentrations above 40 µg/m<sup>3</sup> as "unhealthy for sensitive groups." PM<sub>2.5</sub> concentrations at one or more of Rhode Island's monitors exceeded that level on seven days in the 2000 - 2002 period. Moreover, EPA's draft staff paper, which was released in August 2003, recommends that the daily NAAQS be reduced to 30 – 50 µg/m<sup>3</sup>. PM<sub>2.5</sub> concentrations exceeded 30 µg/m<sup>3</sup> at one or more Rhode Island monitor on 43 days during the 2000 – 2002 period. Considering this additional information, we continue to be concerned about the potential effects of this pollutant on the health of our State's residents.

If you have any questions about this issue, please feel free to contact Barbara Morin at the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management's Office of Air Resources at (401) 222-4700, extension 7012.

Sincerely,



Donald L. Carcieri  
Governor