



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION 5
77 WEST JACKSON BOULEVARD
CHICAGO, IL 60604-3590

JUNE 29, 2004

REPLY TO THE ATTENTION OF:

R-19J

Honorable Jim Doyle
Governor of Wisconsin
Madison, Wisconsin 53707

Dear Governor Doyle:

Fine-particle pollution represents one of the most significant barriers to clean air facing our nation today. These tiny particles - about 1/30th 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 (PM_{2.5}) pollution.

On June 2, 2003, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) requested State recommendations for designations for PM_{2.5} by February 15, 2004. We further solicited recommendations from you on May 19, 2004. However, we received no recommendations from Wisconsin.

Under the Clean Air Act (CAA), EPA is required to promulgate designations for new or revised standards, such as the PM_{2.5} standard. We plan to promulgate final designations by November 2004.

The CAA defines a nonattainment area as any area that does not meet (or that contributes to ambient air quality in a nearby area that does not meet) the national primary or secondary ambient air quality standard for the pollutant. EPA guidance indicates that Wisconsin should use the metropolitan area (the larger of the Consolidated Metropolitan Statistical Area or Metropolitan Statistical Area) as the presumptive boundary for PM_{2.5} nonattainment areas. The guidance provides nine factors that Wisconsin should consider in determining whether to recommend a nonattainment area that deviates from the presumptive boundaries.

Kenosha County is part of the Chicago-Gary-Kenosha metropolitan area, which contains monitors in violation of the PM_{2.5} standard.

Therefore, Kenosha County is presumptively part of the Chicago-Gary-Kenosha PM_{2.5} nonattainment area. In the absence of an alternative recommendation from you, and justification for deviating from the presumptive nonattainment area, we intend to designate Kenosha County as nonattainment for the PM_{2.5} standard. We intend to designate the rest of the State as attainment/unclassified.

You will hear from us again in November when EPA takes the final step in the PM_{2.5} designation process and determines those areas that are in attainment (or unclassifiable) and those areas that are nonattainment. For areas in attainment, the challenge will be not only to maintain, but also to continue the progress you have made toward clean air. It is a commitment to no backsliding in your State's clean air status for fine particles. EPA will also issue a proposed fine particle implementation rule prior to final designations, which will allow you to proceed with planning to achieve clean air.

The Bush Administration is addressing fine particle pollution with 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 continuing dialogue with Wisconsin as we work to finalize the designations for the PM_{2.5} standard. We have provided information to the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources which you may find useful in evaluating whether Kenosha County should be designated nonattainment. We will review any future supporting information the State wishes to submit for our consideration. If you would like to provide additional information about the area in question, please provide this information by September 1, 2004. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Very truly yours,



Bharat Mathur,
Acting Regional Administrator

cc: P. Scott Hassett, Secretary
Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

Renee Cipriano, Director
Illinois Environmental Protection Agency