



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

JUN 28 2004

REPLY TO THE ATTENTION OF

R-19J

Honorable Tim Pawlenty
Governor of Minnesota
St. Paul, Minnesota 55155

Dear Governor Pawlenty:

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 or PM_{2.5} pollution.

We have reviewed the letter from your state concerning the designation recommendations for the fine particle standard, submitted on February 13, 2004, by Sheryl Corrigan, Commissioner of the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency. This letter is to inform you that we do not intend to make any modifications to Minnesota's recommendation of statewide attainment. Also, please note that EPA will address designations of Indian country lands through a separate concurrent process with the Tribes in Minnesota.

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 PM_{2.5} 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 continuing dialogue with your office and the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency as we move forward to make final designations. If you would like to provide additional information for us to consider, please provide this information by September 1, 2004. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "B. Mathur".

Bharat Mathur,
Acting Regional Administrator

cc: Sheryl Corrigan, Commissioner
Minnesota Pollution Control Agency