



**UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY**

REGION 1

1 CONGRESS STREET, SUITE 1100  
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02114-2023

Honorable James H. Douglas  
Governor of Vermont  
109 State Street  
Montpelier, VT 05609-0101

Dear Governor Douglas:

Thank you for your recommendations on the status of fine particle pollution throughout Vermont. Fine-particle pollution represents one of the most significant barriers to clean air facing our nation today. Health studies link these tiny particles – about 1/30<sup>th</sup> 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<sub>2.5</sub>) pollution is an important part of our nation's commitment to clean, healthy air.

We have reviewed the January 16, 2008 letter submitting Vermont's recommendations on air quality designations for the 2006 24-hour PM<sub>2.5</sub> standards. We have also reviewed the technical information submitted to support Vermont'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<sub>2.5</sub> standards. This is truly good news for the residents of your state.

EPA has taken steps to reduce fine particle pollution across the country, such as the Clean Diesel Program to dramatically reduce emissions from highway, nonroad and stationary diesel engines. In addition, State programs to attain the 1997 PM<sub>2.5</sub> standards will also help to reduce unhealthy levels of fine particle pollution.

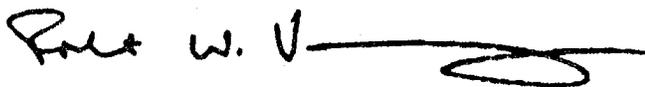
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We intend to make final designation decisions for the 2006 24-hour PM<sub>2.5</sub> standards by December 18, 2008. Please also be aware that in near future, EPA is planning to publish a notice in the Federal Register to solicit public comments on our intended designation decisions. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me. Your air quality staff may wish to contact Anne Arnold, Manager of the Air Quality Planning Unit, at 617-918-1047. We look forward to a continued dialogue with you as we work together to implement the PM<sub>2.5</sub> standards.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert W. Varney", followed by a long horizontal line that loops back under the name.

Robert W. Varney  
Regional Administrator

cc: Laura Pelosi, Commissioner, VT DEC  
Harold Garabedian, Deputy Director, APCD, VT DEC