

U.S. EPA FACT SHEET

EPA Finalizes Approval of California's Request to Redesignate San Diego County to Attainment for the 1997 Ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standard

May 14, 2013

Summary

- EPA is finalizing its approval of California's request to redesignate the San Diego County ozone nonattainment area to attainment for the 1997 8-hour ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standard (1997 ozone standard).
- Today's action signifies a milestone for continued air quality improvement in San Diego County accomplished through the joint efforts of the San Diego County Air Pollution Control District, California Air Resources Board, and EPA to protect public health.
- EPA is also finalizing approval of the State's plan, along with related inventories and motor vehicle emissions budgets, for maintaining attainment of the 1997 ozone standard for ten years beyond redesignation.

Background

- In April 2004, EPA designated San Diego County as nonattainment for the 1997 ozone standard. Today's proposed actions are partly based on upon complete, quality-assured, and certified ambient air quality monitoring data from 2009-2011 showing that San Diego County has attained and continues to attain the 1997 ozone standard.
- In finalizing approval of the State's redesignation request and maintenance plan for San Diego County, EPA has concluded that the area has met the criteria for redesignation in section 107(d)(3)(E) of the Clean Air Act and requirements for maintenance plans and contingency provisions in section 175A of the Clean Air Act.
- Substantial reductions (15% for volatile organic compounds and 25% for nitrogen oxides) in emissions inventories for mobile source (e.g., cars and trucks) occurred between 2002 and 2011. This significantly helped San Diego attain the 1997 ozone standard. Reductions after 2011 from these and other mobile source categories will further reduce the emissions inventories and ensure continued attainment through 2025.
- In the years following the adoption of the 1997 ozone standard, California enhanced its Low Emission Vehicle (LEV) program with its LEV 2 standards. As a result, passenger cars, trucks and sport utility vehicles produce 80% less smog forming pollution today than they did 15 years ago.

- Today's actions only concern the 1997 ozone NAAQS. Despite today's significant milestone in terms of the 1997 ozone standard, the area still remains nonattainment for the more stringent 2008 ozone standard.
- Exposures to ozone can reduce lung function, making it more difficult for people to breathe, especially for those with lung disease, such as children with asthma and older adults. Ground-level ozone is not emitted directly into the air, but forms through a reaction of nitrogen oxides and volatile organic compounds in the presence of sunlight.

Next Steps

- Today's final actions will be published in the Federal Register in approximately two weeks and become effective 30 days after publication in the Federal Register.

For More Information:

<http://www.epa.gov/region9/air/actions/ca.html>