

## U.S. EPA FACT SHEET

---

### California 1-Hour Ozone Final Rule

December 19, 2012

#### Summary

- Today, EPA is finalizing an action to require California to develop a new plan for attainment of the 1-hour ozone air quality standard in the South Coast extreme ozone nonattainment area.
- This rulemaking is in response to a Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals decision remanding EPA's previous actions on California's attainment plan for this area and directing EPA to take further action to ensure that this area has an approved plan in place demonstrating attainment of the 1-hour ozone standard, consistent with Clean Air Act (CAA) requirements.
- Although EPA has replaced the 1-hour ozone standard with a more health protective 8-hour standard, the CAA anti-backsliding provisions require that California have approved plans for attaining the 1-hour standard.

#### Background

- In 2000, EPA approved California's 1997/1999 revised plan for attaining the 1-hour ozone standard in the South Coast. In 2003 and 2008, California submitted updates to that plan, which EPA partially approved and partially disapproved in 2009. The Court found that these revisions called into question the 1997/1999 plan's adequacy and obligated EPA to reevaluate it for compliance with the CAA's attainment requirements.
- Breathing air containing ozone can reduce lung function and increase respiratory symptoms, aggravating asthma or other respiratory conditions. Ozone exposure also has been associated with increased susceptibility to respiratory infections, medication use by asthmatics, and emergency department visits and hospital admissions for individuals with respiratory disease. Ozone exposure may also contribute to premature death, especially in people with heart and lung disease.
- Ground-level ozone is formed when nitrogen oxides (NO<sub>x</sub>) and volatile organic compounds (VOCs) react in the atmosphere in the presence of sunlight. NO<sub>x</sub> and VOCs are called ozone precursors. Motor vehicle exhaust, industrial emissions, and chemical solvents are the major sources of these chemicals. Ozone pollution is a concern especially when the weather conditions needed to form it, lots of sun and hot temperatures, occur.

- EPA provided an initial comment period of 30 days and a subsequent comment period of 14 days on the SIP call proposed rule. We have responded to all comments in our final rule.

**For More Information**

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

