

## FACT SHEET

---

### **Proposed Approval of South Coast Air Quality Plan and Reclassification to “Serious” for the 2006 PM<sub>2.5</sub> Standard**

#### **Summary of Action**

- The EPA is proposing to approve elements of the South Coast Air Quality Management District’s air quality plan (Plan) for attainment of the 2006 PM<sub>2.5</sub> National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) and to reclassify the area from “Moderate” to “Serious” nonattainment for these standards.
- Specifically, the EPA is proposing to approve the following elements of the South Coast Plan:
  - The demonstration that the South Coast cannot practicably attain the 2006 PM<sub>2.5</sub> NAAQS by the Moderate area attainment date, which is December 31, 2015
  - The emission inventories in the Plan
  - The demonstration that the Plan provides for the implementation of reasonably available control measures
  - The control strategy commitments in the Plan
  - The demonstration that the Plan provides for reasonable further progress, and
  - The general conformity budgets.
- Based on the EPA’s proposal to determine that the area cannot practicably attain the 2006 PM<sub>2.5</sub> NAAQS by the Moderate area attainment date (December 31, 2015), the EPA is proposing to reclassify the area as “Serious” nonattainment for these standards.
- The final reclassification would require the State to submit a “Serious area” plan that provides for attainment of the 2006 PM<sub>2.5</sub> NAAQS as expeditiously as practicable and no later than December 31, 2019.
- The reclassification would also require the District to:
  - Submit plan provisions to implement the best available controls measures (“BACM”) for the control of PM<sub>2.5</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub> precursors in the South Coast area and
  - Lower the major stationary source permitting thresholds for PM<sub>2.5</sub> purposes from 100 tons per year to 70 tons per year.
- The EPA will accept comments on this proposed action for 30 days following its publication in the Federal Register.

## **Background**

- The EPA revised the 24-hour PM<sub>2.5</sub> standards in 2006 from 65 µg/m<sup>3</sup> to 35 µg/m<sup>3</sup>. The South Coast continues to violate the 2006 PM<sub>2.5</sub> NAAQS.
- The South Coast Air Quality Management District submitted the Plan in 2012 and submitted revisions to the Plan in 2015.
- PM<sub>2.5</sub> can be emitted directly into the atmosphere or formed in the atmosphere as a result of various chemical reactions from emissions of nitrogen oxides, sulfur dioxide, volatile organic compounds, and ammonia. These particles can reach the deepest regions of the lungs.
- Exposure to particle pollution is linked to a variety of significant health problems including damage to lung tissue, cancer and premature death.

## **Next Steps**

- This proposed action will be published in the Federal Register and will provide a 30-day public comment period from the date of publication. The EPA invites the public to submit comments relevant to this proposed action. Instructions on how to submit comments are included in the Federal Register notice. The proposal and a technical support document containing more detailed information on our proposed action can be found at the website identified below.
- Because seven tribal nations are located within the South Coast nonattainment area, we have invited tribes located within South Coast to consult with EPA on the proposed reclassification of the South Coast nonattainment area.

## **For More Information:**

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