



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

APR 30 2012

THE ADMINISTRATOR

The Honorable Edmund G. Brown
Governor of California
State Capitol Building, Suite #1173
Sacramento, California 95814

Dear Governor Brown:

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency today is taking the next step to address ozone air quality by issuing final area designations for the 2008 National Ambient Air Quality Standards for ozone. This action, required under the Clean Air Act, lets communities know if their outdoor air is meeting the national standards for ground-level ozone and which areas are violating, or contributing to violations of, the national standards.

The EPA strengthened the ozone standards on March 12, 2008, to increase protection of public health and the environment. Breathing air containing high levels of ozone, a key ingredient in smog, can reduce lung function, trigger respiratory symptoms, and worsen asthma or other respiratory conditions. Ozone exposure also can contribute to premature death, especially in people with heart and lung disease. The new standards, which also protect against damage to sensitive vegetation and forested ecosystems, are a key part of the EPA's commitment to a clean, healthy environment. As we have done for more than 40 years, the EPA will work with you to improve air quality and continue to protect the health of our citizens.

As part of the designations process, the EPA worked closely with states, tribes and local governments to identify areas in the nation that meet the standards and those that need to take steps to reduce ozone pollution. After reviewing the most recent certified ozone air quality data and evaluating factors to assess contribution to nearby levels of ozone, I have determined that some areas in California violate the 2008 ozone standards or contribute to violations of the standards in a nearby area. As a result, the EPA is designating portions of California "nonattainment." The remaining areas in the state, do not violate the standards or contribute to a violation of the standards in a nearby area and will be designated "unclassifiable/attainment." I appreciate the information that California shared with the EPA throughout this process to assess ozone air quality.

Under the Clean Air Act, ozone nonattainment areas are also classified at the time of designation according to severity of their ozone air quality problem. The EPA finalized a rule today that establishes the air quality thresholds for the different classification categories for the 2008 ozone standards and areas have been classified according to that rule.

The enclosed table identifies the designation and classification for areas within California Areas designated as nonattainment are subject to planning and emission reduction requirements as specified in the Clean Air Act. Requirements vary according to an area's classification. The EPA will be proposing an ozone implementation rule soon to assist states with nonattainment areas in the development of state implementation plans for attaining the ozone standards.

History shows that cleaner air, better health and economic growth go hand-in-hand. Areas designated "nonattainment" will need to take actions to improve ozone air quality expeditiously, as required by the Clean Air Act. For areas designated "unclassifiable/attainment," the challenge is to maintain clean air. Working closely with the states and tribes, the EPA is implementing the 2008 ozone standards using a common sense approach that protects air quality, maximizes flexibility and minimizes burden on state, tribal and local governments.

I recognize that the EPA shares the responsibility with the states and tribes for managing ozone air pollution. I also recognize that air pollution crossing state boundaries can contribute to downwind violations of the standards. Current and upcoming federal standards and safeguards, including pollution reduction rules for power plants, industrial facilities, vehicles and fuels, will ensure steady progress to reduce smog-forming pollution and will protect public health in communities across America.

The EPA will be assisting state, tribal and local air agencies by identifying currently available emission reduction measures as well as relevant information concerning their efficiency and cost-effectiveness. State, local and tribal agencies will be able to use this information in developing emission reduction strategies, plans and programs to attain and maintain cleaner air.

I look forward to continuing to work with you and your staff as we strive to advance our shared goal of clean air. Additional technical information on the ozone designations can be found at www.epa.gov/ozonedesignations. If you have questions, please contact me, or your staff may call Sarah Hospodor-Pallone, Deputy Associate Administrator for Intergovernmental Relations, at 202-564-7178.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'L. Jackson', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Lisa P. Jackson

Enclosure

Enclosure

**2008 Ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standards*
Initial Designations and Classifications for Areas in California**

Area Name	County Name	Designation	Classification
Calaveras County, CA	Calaveras County	Nonattainment	Marginal
Chico (Butte County), CA	Butte County	Nonattainment	Marginal
Imperial County, CA	Imperial County	Nonattainment	Marginal
Kern County (Eastern Kern), CA	Kern County (p)	Nonattainment	Marginal
Los Angeles-San Bernardino Counties (West Mojave Desert), CA	Los Angeles County (p) San Bernardino County (p)	Nonattainment	Severe
Los Angeles-South Coast Air Basin, CA	Los Angeles County (p) Orange County Riverside County (p) San Bernardino County (p)	Nonattainment	Extreme
Mariposa County, CA	Mariposa County	Nonattainment	Marginal
Nevada County (Western part), CA	Nevada County (p)	Nonattainment	Marginal
Riverside County (Coachella Valley), CA	Riverside County (p)	Nonattainment	Severe
Sacramento Metro, CA	El Dorado County (p) Placer County (p) Sacramento County Solano County (p) Sutter County (p) Yolo County	Nonattainment	Severe
San Diego County, CA	San Diego County	Nonattainment	Marginal
San Francisco Bay Area, CA	Alameda County Contra Costa County Marin County Napa County San Francisco County San Mateo County Santa Clara County Solano County (p) Sonoma County (p)	Nonattainment	Marginal

San Joaquin Valley, CA	Fresno County Kern County (p) Kings County Madera County Merced County San Joaquin County Stanislaus County Tulare County	Nonattainment	Extreme
San Luis Obispo (Eastern San Luis Obispo), CA	San Luis Obispo County (p)	Nonattainment	Marginal
Tuscan Buttes, CA	Tehama County (p)	Nonattainment	Marginal
Ventura County, CA	Ventura County (p)	Nonattainment	Serious
Rest of State - Unclassifiable/Attainment			

* The primary and secondary ozone National Ambient Ozone Air Quality Standards are identical. Designations apply for both standards.

(p) - partial county