

U.S. EPA FACT SHEET

Proposed Approval of Arizona's Request to Redesignate the Phoenix-Mesa Area To Attainment for the 1997 Ozone Standard

March 14, 2014

Summary

- EPA is proposing to approve Arizona's request to redesignate the Phoenix-Mesa ozone nonattainment area to attainment for the 1997 8-hour ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standard (1997 ozone standard).
- EPA is also proposing to approve 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 the Phoenix-Mesa area as nonattainment for the 1997 ozone standard. Today's proposed actions are based in part upon complete, quality-assured, and certified ambient air quality monitoring data from 2010-2012 showing that Phoenix-Mesa area has attained and continues to attain the 1997 ozone standard. Air quality data collected in 2013, which are preliminary at this time, are consistent with attainment.
- In proposing to approve the State's redesignation request and maintenance plan for the Phoenix-Mesa area, 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.
- Today's action signifies a milestone for continued air quality improvement in the Phoenix-Mesa area accomplished through the joint efforts of the Maricopa Association of Governments, Arizona Department of Environmental Quality, Maricopa County Air Quality Department, Pinal County Air Quality Control District, and EPA to protect public health.
- Today's action only concerns 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 proposed action will be published in the Federal Register in approximately two weeks and will provide a 30-day period for public comment.
- After the close of the comment period, EPA will evaluate and respond to any comments in a subsequent rulemaking action.

For More Information:

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