



U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY - REGION 9

FACT SHEET

**PROPOSED APPROVAL OF CLARK COUNTY
SERIOUS AREA CARBON MONOXIDE PLAN
FOR THE LAS VEGAS METROPOLITAN
NONATTAINMENT AREA**

January, 2003

Today's Proposal

- We are proposing to approve the Clark County Serious Area Carbon Monoxide (CO) Attainment Plan as meeting the applicable requirements of the Clean Air Act (CAA).
- In addition, we are proposing to approve Nevada's Inspection and Maintenance (I/M) program under section 187(a)(6) of the CAA, Clark County's Cleaner Burning Gasoline (CBG) program under section 211(c)(4)(C) of the CAA, and Nevada's wintertime specifications related to Reid Vapor Pressure (RVP) for gasoline sold in Clark County. These three programs are the major control measures, other than the oxygenated fuels program that we approved in a prior, separate action and the federal motor vehicle control program, that are relied on in the CO plan to demonstrate attainment of the health-based standard.
- EPA determined that the entire plan was complete in September 2000. EPA made a positive adequacy decision on the conformity emission budgets in the plan (effective December 2000). A petition for review was filed with the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit challenging EPA's adequacy decision by a local environmental group, the Nevada Environmental Coalition. In March 2002, the Ninth Circuit ruled in favor of EPA's adequacy determination and denied the petition.

Las Vegas' Air Quality

- There are presently no monitored exceedances of the CO health-based standard, which is 9 ppm averaged over 8 hours. Clark County has experienced no exceedances from 1999 to the present. The number of exceedances of the CO NAAQS has decreased from over

40 per year in the 1980's to less than 3 per year in late 1990's. The severity of violations has decreased, from a high value of 21 ppm in 1981 to a high value of 7.3 ppm in 2000. The last exceedances of the eight hour CO NAAQS, 10.3 ppm and 10.1 ppm occurred in 1998 at the Sunrise Avenue site in Las Vegas.

- The improved air quality is the direct result of Nevada's implementation of controls to reduce CO levels, as well as tighter federal motor vehicle emission standards. The key controls adopted by Nevada to improve air quality in the Las Vegas area include cleaner burning gasoline, a vehicle inspection and maintenance program, a alternative fuel vehicle program and voluntary rideshare programs. Numerous pollution reduction measures are also in place for industrial and commercial sources. Nevada will need to continue to implement these controls in order to maintain clean air.

Background

Impact of CO on Public Health

- CO is a pollutant generated primarily by mobile sources, cars and trucks. Major sources of combustion, like power plants, can also generate CO. CO affects people's health by entering the bloodstream and reducing oxygen delivery to the body's organs and tissues. Exposure to elevated levels of CO may cause loss of visual perception and manual dexterity, as well as fatigue, chest pains, and breathing difficulties. Extreme exposures can cause loss of consciousness and even death.
- Young children, senior citizens, pregnant women and people with asthma or heart and lung problems are especially susceptible to the effects of CO pollution.

Public Comment Requested

- We are encouraging the public to comment on the proposed approval of the Clark County Serious Area CO Plan and on our proposal to approve Nevada's I/M, the County's CBG program, and Nevada's low RVP requirement. Comments will be accepted until approximately February 28, 2003.
- For more information, please call Ken Bigos, Associate Director, Air Division, U.S. EPA Region 9 at (415) 972-3967 or Karina O'Connor, Air Quality Planner, Air Division, U.S. EPA Region 9 at (775) 833-1276. Additional information can be found on our website at www.epa.gov/region09/air.