PM2.5 Field Blank Reporting - AQS
Frequently Asked Questions

Q1. When is PM2.5 filter blank reporting required to begin?

AQS reporting is required for field blanks that have been exposed in the field on or after January 1, 2007 (see 71 FR 61301). The data values would not actually be due to AQS until 90 days after the end of the first quarter of 2007, or June 30, 2007.

Q2. What information is required to be reported?

The weight change between pre-weigh and post-weigh for each field blank filter.

Q3. What transaction is used to report filter blank values to AQS?

RB – Blanks Data (see AQS Data Coding Manual, Section 8).
http://www.epa.gov/ttn/airs/airsaqs/manuals/AQS%20Data%20Coding%20Manual_v2.12.pdf

Q4. Other transaction specific coding instructions

1. Utilize the AQS ID for the site where the field blank was installed
2. Parameter - Same as for the monitor where the concentration data is reported – in this case it would be 88101
3. Duration Code – 7 (24 hours)
4. Reported Unit – 077 (micrograms)
5. Method Code – Same as for the monitor where concentration data is reported
6. Blank Type - FIELD
7. Date
   a. Single filter samplers – The date that the field blank was manually placed in the sampler.
   b. Sequential samplers – The date the field blank filter was programmed to be cycled through the sampler.
8. Time – 00:00
9. Blank Value – the actual weight change in the filter after completion of field blank process
10. Qualifier Code – do not use if blanks are missed

Example Transaction

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RB|I|37|067|0022|88101|1|7|077|118|FIELD|20070101|00:00|13|||||||||||
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Q5. How can the data be retrieved?

The blanks data are not summarized in any standard AQS report. It is only available for retrieval with the AMP503 report (Extract Sample Blank Data) which creates the transaction format work file. The data are also available using AQS Discoverer. A query to assist with the retrieval of blanks data is under development and will be shared with AQS Discover users when available.

Q6. Who will use these data?

These data will support monitoring and quality assurance staff efforts to track trends in blank mass-loadings and evaluate performance of laboratory and field filter-handling practices. Researchers will use the data to better understand atmospheric fine particle concentrations.

Questions? Lewis Weinstock/OAQPS/AQAD/AAMG
Weinstock.lewis@epa.gov or 919-541-3661