

**SACRAMENTO METROPOLITAN
AIR QUALITY MANAGEMENT DISTRICT**

For Agenda of March 27, 2008

To: Board of Directors
Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District

From: Larry Greene, Air Pollution Control Officer
Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District

Subject: New Ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standards

Recommendations - Information item

Overview

On March 12, 2008, the US Environmental Protection Agency strengthened the national ambient air quality standards (NAAQS) for ozone. EPA considered over 1700 new health studies and concluded that the previous ozone standards, set in 1997, were not sufficient to protect public health or avoid environmental effects including damage to vegetation and ecosystems. New health concerns identified by the studies include increased asthma medication use, school absenteeism, cardiac effects, and mortality. EPA estimates the health benefits of achieving the new standards are valued between \$2 billion and \$19 billion nationwide.

Standards

The 2008 standards are 11 percent lower than the 1997 standards. The 1997 standards remain in effect. The Sacramento region does not meet either standard. The most recent data shows peak ozone levels were recorded in Folsom, and a larger area of the Sacramento region violates the new standards than the prior standards. Most of Sacramento County violates the new standards.

	8-hour Ozone
1997 standard	0.084 ppm
2008 standards	0.075 ppm
Sacramento (Folsom)	0.097 ppm

Schedule

Setting new standards is just the beginning of a lengthy process to bring areas into attainment. State recommendations for boundaries of nonattainment areas must be submitted by March 12, 2009. EPA has one year to review the recommendations and make formal designations, by March 12, 2010. Areas then have three years to develop a plan for meeting the new standards. Areas are given up to 20 years to meet the new standards, depending on the severity of their classification. EPA will be establishing rules to define classifications later this fall. If Sacramento's classification remains 'severe', the region would have 15 years after designation to meet the standards, 2025.

Public Education

EPA also revised the Air Quality Index (AQI) chart used to advise the public about current air quality. Beginning May 1st we will use the new AQI chart in our *Spare the Air* program. The following chart shows a comparison of the AQI levels.

Revised Ozone AQI Breakpoints, 2008

Category	AQI Value	1997 8-hour (ppm)	2008 8-hour (ppm)
Good	0-50	0.000-0.064	0.000-0.059
Moderate	51-100	0.065-0.084	0.060-0.075
Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups	101-150	0.085-0.104	0.076-0.095
Unhealthy	151-200	0.105-0.124	0.096-0.115
Very Unhealthy	201-300	0.125-0.374	0.116-0.374
Hazardous	301-400	No Change	No Change
	401-500	No Change	No Change

Other changes

Later this fall EPA will establish a new monitoring regulation associated with the new standards. The requirements will likely include increasing the length of the monitoring period for seasonal monitors and additional ozone monitoring in rural areas. This may affect our seasonal ozone monitoring at our Sloughhouse station.

Conclusion

The new ozone standards set by EPA reflect new scientific evidence of health problems including cardiac events, school absences, and mortality. The 1997 ozone standards remain in effect. The Sacramento region's attainment plan is scheduled for consideration by the Board of Directors later this year. The control strategies included in that plan will continue our progress to improved air quality. After completing the current planning effort, we will begin the process for identifying the additional reductions needed to meet the new standards. The region will have additional time, as late as 2030, to meet the new standards.

Respectfully submitted,

Larry Greene, Air Pollution Control Officer
Sacramento Metropolitan AQMD

Approved as to form:

Kathrine Pittard, District Counsel
Sacramento Metropolitan AQMD