

FACT SHEET

Revision to the Near-road Nitrogen Dioxide Minimum Monitoring Requirements

ACTION

On May 5, 2016, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) proposed to revise a component of the minimum monitoring requirements for near-road nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) monitoring.

Specifically, the EPA proposed to remove the requirement for near-road NO₂ monitoring stations in Core Based Statistical Areas (CBSAs) having populations between 500,000 and 1,000,000 persons. Under current regulations, these monitors are due to be installed and operational by January 1, 2017.

Current near-road NO₂ monitoring data indicate air quality levels in the near-road environment are well below the National Ambient Air Quality Standard (NAAQS) for NO₂. In light of this information, and the relationship between population, traffic, and expected NO₂ concentrations in the near-road environment, EPA expects measured near-road NO₂ concentrations in relatively smaller CBSAs (e.g., CBSAs with populations less than 1,000,000 persons) would exhibit similar and, more likely, lower concentrations than what is being measured in larger urban areas.

This action would not modify the requirements for near-road NO₂ monitors in more populated areas, area-wide NO₂ monitoring, or for monitoring of NO₂ in areas with susceptible and vulnerable populations.

EPA will accept public comment on this proposal for 45 days after it is published in the *Federal Register*.

BACKGROUND

In support of the 2010 NO₂ National Ambient Air Quality Standard (75 FR 6474), the EPA revised the requirements for minimum numbers of ambient NO₂ monitors. This action included requirements:

- for new monitoring near major roads in larger urban areas,
- to characterize NO₂ concentrations representative of wider spatial scales in larger urban areas (area-wide monitors), and
- for monitors intended to characterize NO₂ exposures of susceptible and vulnerable populations.

Originally, the near-road component of the ambient NO₂ monitoring network was required to be completely operational by January 1, 2013. However, in 2012, through a public notice and comment rulemaking, the EPA established three phases for the installation of near-road NO₂ monitoring stations. The revised installation schedule allowed more time for states to establish the near-road NO₂ monitoring network on a schedule consistent with available resources.

- Phase 1: In CBSAs with a population of 1,000,000 or more persons, one near-road NO₂ monitor shall be reflected in the state Annual Monitoring Network Plan submitted July 1, 2013, and that monitor shall be operational by January 1, 2014.
- Phase 2: In CBSAs where two near-road NO₂ monitors are required (either because the CBSA has a population of 2,500,000 or more persons, or has a population of 500,000 or more persons plus one or more roadway segments having annual average daily traffic [AADT] counts of 250,000 or more), the second near-road NO₂ monitor shall be reflected in the state Annual Monitoring Network Plan submitted July 1, 2014, and that monitor shall be operational by January 1, 2015.
- Phase 3: In CBSAs with a population of at least 500,000 persons, but less than 1,000,000 persons, one near-road NO₂ monitor shall be reflected in the state Annual Monitoring Network Plan submitted July 1, 2016, and the monitor shall be operational by January 1, 2017.

HOW TO COMMENT

Comments, identified by Docket ID No. EPA-HQ-OAR-2015-0486, may be submitted by one of the following methods:

- www.regulations.gov: follow the on-line instructions for submitting comments.
- Email: Comments may be sent by electronic mail (email) to: a-and-r-Docket@epa.gov.
- Fax: Fax your comments to: (202) 566-9744.
- Mail: Send your comments to: Air and Radiation Docket and Information Center, Environmental Protection Agency, Mail Code: 2822T, 1200 Pennsylvania Ave., NW, Washington, D.C. 20460.
- Hand Delivery or Courier: Deliver your comments to: Air and Radiation Docket and Information Center, 1301 Constitution Ave., NW, Room 3334, Washington, D.C. 20004. Such deliveries are only accepted during the Docket's normal hours of operation and special arrangements should be made for deliveries of boxed information.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Interested parties can download the rule from EPA's web site on the Internet under Recent Actions at the following address: <https://www3.epa.gov/ttnamti1/monregs.html>.

Other places to read the proposed rule and background information (use Docket ID No. EPA-HQ-OAR-2015-0486):

- **EPA's electronic public docket and comment system** at <http://www.regulations.gov>.
- **The EPA Docket Center's Public Reading Room** (for hard copies).
 - The Public Reading Room is located at EPA Headquarters, Room Number 3334 in EPA West Building, 1301 Constitution Avenue, NW, Washington,
 - DC. Hours of operation are 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. eastern standard time, Monday through Friday, excluding federal holidays.

- You will have to show photo identification, pass through a metal detector, and sign the EPA visitor log. Any materials you bring with you will be processed through an X-ray machine as well. You will be provided a badge that must be visible at all times.

For further information about the rulemaking, contact Neilson Watkins at EPA's Office of Air Quality Planning and Standards at (919) 541-5522 or watkins.nealson@epa.gov.