

AIR NEWS

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EPA proposes revisions to federal ozone standard

In response to a federal court order, the Environmental Protection Agency recently [proposed a new National Ambient Air Quality Standard \(NAAQS\) for ozone](#).

National Ambient Air Quality Standards [for six main pollutants](#) include both a primary standard, to protect human health, and a secondary standard, to protect public and animal welfare, visibility and other criteria. The current ozone NAAQS, set in 2008, is 75 parts per billion (ppb), or 0.075 parts per million. EPA is proposing to revise the primary and secondary standards to within a range of 65-70 ppb, but is also taking comment on a range of 60-75 ppb. Public health experts on the Clean Air Science Advisory Committee recommended a range of 60-70 ppb.

The Clean Air Act requires EPA to review ambient air quality standards every five years. EPA was under a court deadline to propose a revised ozone standard by December 1, 2014. The agency also faces a court-ordered deadline of October 1, 2015, to finalize the ozone rule.

The public comment period for the proposed ozone standard ends on March 17, 2015. DNR is currently reviewing the proposal for potential comment.

Timeline for federal and state actions

If EPA finalizes the proposed ozone rule, it would have to designate nonattainment areas by October 1, 2017. The designations would likely be based on three years of monitoring data from the 2014-2016 ozone seasons. Areas in nonattainment would have three, six or nine years to meet the new standard, depending on how much they initially exceed it. The state would be responsible for developing a [state implementation plan \(SIP\)](#) to meet the new standard.

In addition, only a few areas in Wisconsin are currently not attaining a National Ambient Air Quality Standard. A portion of Oneida County does not meet the 2010 sulfur dioxide standard. Sheboygan County and the eastern portion of Kenosha County do not meet the 2008 ozone standard. Sheboygan County is also designated nonattainment for the 1997 ozone standard.

For more information, contact David Bizot, regional pollutants and mobile sources section chief in the Bureau of Air Management, email David.Bizot@wisconsin.gov.

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