



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION 5
77 WEST JACKSON BOULEVARD
CHICAGO, IL 60604-3590
FEB 06 2013

The Honorable Pat Quinn
Governor of Illinois
207 State House
Springfield, Illinois 62706

REPLY TO THE ATTENTION OF:

Dear Governor Quinn:

I am writing to inform you of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's response to the State of Illinois' air quality designation recommendations for the 2010 revision to the primary National Ambient Air Quality Standard for sulfur dioxide (SO₂). As you may know, the Clean Air Act requires EPA to set National Ambient Air Quality Standards for pollutants considered harmful to public health and the environment. Reducing SO₂ emissions is an important part of EPA's commitment to a clean, healthy environment. Exposure to SO₂ can cause a range of adverse health effects, including difficulty breathing and increased asthma symptoms.

On June 3, 2010, EPA strengthened the health-based or "primary" standard for SO₂ by establishing a standard for 1-hour average SO₂ concentrations at a level of 75 parts per billion. The Clean Air Act requires EPA to complete the initial designations process within two years of promulgating a new or revised standard. If EPA has insufficient information to make these designations, EPA has the authority to extend the designation process by up to one year. On July 27, 2012, EPA announced that it had insufficient information to complete the designations for the 1-hour SO₂ standard within two years and extended the designations deadline to June 3, 2013.

At this time, EPA is proceeding with nonattainment designations for most areas where 2009-2011 monitoring data indicate violations of the 1-hour SO₂ standard. EPA intends to address the designations for all other areas in separate future actions. After carefully considering Illinois' recommendations and the associated technical information, including air quality data from 2009-2011, EPA intends to designate the following areas, including the following counties or portions of counties, as nonattainment for the 2010 SO₂ standard:

<u>Nonattainment Area</u>	<u>County</u>
Lemont	Cook County, IL (Lemont Township) Will County, IL (DuPage and Lockport Townships)
Pekin*	Tazewell County, IL (Cincinnati and Pekin Townships) Peoria County, IL* (Hollis Township)

The asterisk (*) indicates that the boundary for this intended nonattainment area represents a modification to the boundary that the state recommended. The enclosed Technical Support Document provides a detailed analysis that supports these preliminary nonattainment area decisions.

With input from a diverse group of stakeholders, EPA has also developed a comprehensive strategy for implementing the 1-hour SO₂ standard that focuses resources on identifying and addressing unhealthy levels of SO₂. The strategy is available at: <http://www.epa.gov/airquality/sulfurdioxide/implement.html>. EPA will continue to work closely with our partners at the state, tribal, and local levels to ensure health-protective, commonsense implementation of the 1-hour SO₂ standard.

EPA will continue to work with the state regarding the appropriate boundaries for the areas in Illinois. If the state has additional information for EPA to consider, please submit it by April 8, 2013. We also will be publishing a Federal Register notice announcing a 30-day period for the public to provide input on EPA's preliminary nonattainment designation decisions. We intend to promulgate these designations for areas with monitored violations of the 2010 SO₂ standard by June 2013. We are not yet prepared to propose designations action or seek public comment on other areas.

We look forward to a continued dialogue with the state as we work to implement the 2010 primary SO₂ standard. For additional information regarding initial designations on the SO₂ standard, please visit www.epa.gov/so2designations. If you have any questions, please contact me at 312-886-3000, or your staff may contact George Czerniak, Director of EPA Region 5's Air and Radiation Division, at 312-353-2212 or czerniak.george@epa.gov.

Sincerely,



Susan Hedman
Regional Administrator

Enclosure

cc: John J. Kim
Director, Illinois Environmental Protection Agency

Laurel Kroack
Chief, Bureau of Air,
Illinois Environmental Protection Agency