



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

FEB 06 2013

The Honorable Scott Walker  
 Governor of Wisconsin  
 115 East Capitol  
 Madison, Wisconsin 53702

REPLY TO THE ATTENTION OF:

Dear Governor Walker:

I am writing to inform you of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's response to the State of Wisconsin's air quality designation recommendations for the 2010 revision to the primary National Ambient Air Quality Standard for sulfur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>). 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 SO<sub>2</sub> emissions is an important part of EPA's commitment to a clean, healthy environment. Exposure to SO<sub>2</sub> 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 SO<sub>2</sub> by establishing a standard for 1-hour average SO<sub>2</sub> 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 SO<sub>2</sub> 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 SO<sub>2</sub> standard. EPA intends to address the designations for all other areas in separate future actions. After carefully considering Wisconsin's 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 SO<sub>2</sub> standard:

<u>Nonattainment Area</u>	<u>County</u>
Rhineland	Oneida County, WI (The area including the City of Rhineland and the Towns of Crescent, Newbold, Pine Lake, and Pelican.)

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 SO<sub>2</sub> standard that focuses resources on identifying and addressing unhealthy levels of SO<sub>2</sub>. 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 SO<sub>2</sub> standard.

EPA will continue to work with the state regarding the appropriate boundaries for the areas in Wisconsin. 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 SO<sub>2</sub> 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 SO<sub>2</sub> standard. For additional information regarding initial designations on the SO<sub>2</sub> standard, please visit [www.epa.gov/so2designations](http://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](mailto:czerniak.george@epa.gov).

Sincerely,



Susan Hedman  
Regional Administrator

Enclosure

cc: Cathy Stepp  
Secretary, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

Bart Sponseller  
Director, Bureau of Air Management,  
Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources