

Fact Sheet — Area Designations for the 2010 Sulfur Dioxide Primary National Ambient Air Quality Standard for Four Areas in Texas (Supplement to Round 2)

ACTIONS

- On November 29, 2016, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) took additional steps to implement the health-based national air quality standard for sulfur dioxide (SO₂) set in 2010. EPA has identified or “designated” three areas in Texas that do not meet the standard as “nonattainment”. These areas include portions of:
 - Freestone and Anderson Counties, Texas
 - Rusk and Panola Counties, Texas
 - Titus County, Texas
- There is not enough information to make a determination regarding attainment for Milam County, Texas. EPA is designating this area “unclassifiable”. The table at the end of this fact sheet provides further details for the four areas covered by this action.
- These final designations will take effect 30 days after the notice is published in the *Federal Register*.

BACKGROUND

- On June 3, 2010, the EPA strengthened the health-based or “primary” standard for SO₂ by establishing a 1-hour standard at a level of 75 parts per billion. On July 25, 2013, the EPA designated 29 areas in 16 states as nonattainment, but did not at that time designate other areas.
- On June 30, 2016, EPA designated 61 areas in 24 states as:
 - “unclassifiable/attainment” - meeting the 1-hour health based national air quality standard for sulfur dioxide (41 areas),
 - “nonattainment” – not meeting the standard (4 areas), or
 - “unclassifiable” – not enough information to make a determination (16 areas).Today’s action supplements the June 2016 action.
- To meet the requirements of a March 2, 2015, court-ordered schedule, EPA must complete SO₂ designations for the remainder of the U.S. by December 31, 2017, or December 31, 2020. The date will depend on what choices states make for areas that are subject to the EPA’s SO₂ Data Requirements Rule.
 - If a state chooses to install and operate new monitors for areas under the Rule, and those monitors are operating by January 1, 2017, the EPA is required to designate them by the 2020 deadline, which will allow the new monitors to generate three full calendar years of data to inform the designation.

- If the state chooses to model sources under the rule, or establishes new emissions limits for a source by January 2017 in lieu of the rule's modeling or monitoring requirements, or has areas that are not subject to the rule, all of those areas will be designated by December 31, 2017, since it is not necessary to wait for the results from new monitors being installed.

REQUIREMENTS FOR DESIGNATED AREAS

Nonattainment Areas

- The Clean Air Act requires air agencies to take steps to control pollution in SO₂ nonattainment areas. Those steps may include stricter controls on industrial facilities.
- State and local governments detail these steps in plans that demonstrate how they will meet the SO₂ standard. Those plans are known as state implementation plans (SIPs). States have 18 months after the effective date of final designations to develop and submit their plans to EPA.
- Once designated, nonattainment areas are subject to Nonattainment New Source Review requirements. New Source Review is a permitting program for industrial facilities to ensure that new and modified sources of pollution do not impede progress toward cleaner air.
- Nonattainment areas are required to meet the standard as quickly as possible, but no later than five years after designation. Six months after that date, EPA must determine whether the area has attained the standard. If EPA determines that an area has failed to meet the standard, the state has 12 months to submit a SIP revision that demonstrates that the area will attain the standard within five years of EPA's determination.

Unclassifiable Areas

- The SO₂ Data Requirements Rule issued in 2015 requires that unclassifiable areas containing large SO₂ sources be further characterized to ensure compliance with the SO₂ standard. For such cases, states must provide the EPA with a characterization of SO₂ air quality in the area by either conducting air quality monitoring in the area or conducting modeling of the impacts of those sources.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- For more information on the designation process for the SO₂ standard go to EPA's Web site at <http://www.epa.gov/sulfur-dioxide-designations>.

**Final Area Designations for the 2010 SO₂ Standards
Round 2 Supplement – November 2016**

(p) partial county

State	Area Name	SO ₂ Source	Designation Area	EPA Final Designation
Texas	Freestone and Anderson Counties, TX	Big Brown Electric Station	Freestone (p) Anderson (p)	Nonattainment
	Rusk and Panola Counties, TX	Martin Lake	Rusk (p) Panola (p)	Nonattainment
	Titus County, TX	Monticello	Titus (p)	Nonattainment
	Milam County, TX	Sadow	Milam	Unclassifiable

1 state

4 areas

4 sources

5 partial counties
1 full county

3 Nonattainment
1 Unclassifiable