

US EPA Region 4 Policy on Establishing, Discontinuing, or Relocating a State and Local Air Monitoring Station (SLAMS)

To ensure consistency in documentation submitted for ambient air monitoring site establishment, relocation, or discontinuation, EPA Region 4 requires the following information be provided in 1) the annual monitoring network plan due July 1 each calendar year or 2) an addendum to the network plan.

Requested changes to an agency's network will only be considered and reviewed if they are accompanied by a cover letter on agency letterhead, and dated and signed by a designated agency representative. Any changes proposed to an agency's SLAMS network that were not included in the annual network plan must be public noticed with a 30-day comment period. We will accept the documentation via email and/or hardcopy. We also encourage agencies to submit draft site proposals to EPA for review before posting the information for public comment.

Please address the letter to our Division Director:

Beverly H. Banister, Director
Air, Pesticides, and Toxics Management Division
US EPA Region 4
Sam Nunn Atlanta Federal Center
61 Forsyth St., SW
Atlanta, GA 30303

Please cc: Todd Rinck, Chief, Air Data and Analysis Section (rinck.todd@epa.gov) and the appropriate EPA air monitoring contact for your state.

I. New or Relocated Site Proposals

The documentation submitted must contain the following information for each proposed site as required by 40 CFR §58.10(a) and (b):

- A statement of whether the operation of each monitor meets the requirements of 40 CFR Part 58 Appendices A, B, C, D, and E, where applicable.
- The following information to demonstrate that monitor siting criteria requirements of 40 CFR Part 58 Appendix E are met:
 - site photos facing from the site in each direction (N, S, E, W),
 - applicable measurements to any obstructions, trees or roadways, and
 - the proposed probe height for the site (required for preliminary Appendix E evaluation).
- The AQS ID for the proposed site
- The location, including street address and geographical coordinates
- The sampling and analysis method(s) for each measured parameter

- The operating schedules for each monitor
- The monitoring objective and spatial scale of representativeness for each monitor as defined in Appendix D to this part
- The MSA, CBSA, CSA or other area represented by the monitor
- The dates of the public comment period, whether any comments were received and if so, the comments must be included along with the agency's response.

A site proposal package should also include:

1. A narrative description and relevant documentation of your agency's site selection process. This should include any documentation demonstrating how your agency followed the appropriate EPA guidance for selecting a site (see list of EPA guidance documents below).
2. Aerial photos or site location map
3. Nearby wind rose(s)
4. Anything else you considered when selecting the site

Finally, as applicable, a site proposal package should also include the following pollutant-specific information:

- The identification of any sites that are suitable and sites that are not suitable for comparison against the annual PM_{2.5} NAAQS as described in §58.30. (See §58.10(b)(7))
- The designation of Pb monitors as either source-oriented or non-source-oriented according to Appendix D to 40 CFR part 58. (See §58.10(b)(9))
- Requests for waivers of applicable Pb monitoring requirements in Appendix D. Example: the use of Pb-PM₁₀ monitoring in lieu of Pb-TSP monitoring as allowed for under paragraph 2.10 of Appendix C to 40 CFR part 58. (See §58.10(b)(10) and (11))
- The identification of required NO₂ monitors as near-road, area-wide, or vulnerable and susceptible population monitors in accordance with Appendix D, section 4.3. (See §58.10(b)(12))
- The identification of any PM_{2.5} FEMs and/or ARMs whose data are not of sufficient quality to be compared to the NAAQS. For required SLAMS where the agency identifies that the PM_{2.5} Class III FEM or ARM does not produce data of sufficient quality for comparison to the NAAQS, the monitoring agency must ensure that an operating FRM or filter-based FEM meeting the sample frequency requirements described in §58.12 or other Class III PM_{2.5} FEM or ARM with data of sufficient quality is operating and reporting data to meet the network design criteria described in Appendix D. (See §58.10(b)(13))
- Modeling input and output files (if modeling was used to inform site selection).

Depending on the type of monitoring site, the proposal should document that the site selection process in the appropriate EPA guidance was followed:

- Near-road NO₂ Monitoring Technical Assistance Document (TAD):
epa.gov/ttnamti1/files/nearroad/NearRoadTAD.pdf
- SO₂ NAAQS Designations Source-Oriented Monitoring Technical Assistance Document:
epa.gov/oagqs001/sulfurdioxide/pdfs/SO2MonitoringTAD.pdf
- Guideline on ozone monitoring site selection:
epa.gov/ttnamti1/archive/files/ambient/criteria/reldocs/r-98-002.pdf
- Guidance For Network Design and Optimum Site Exposure For PM_{2.5} And PM₁₀:
epa.gov/ttn/amtic/files/ambient/pm25/network/r-99-022.pdf

II. Site Discontinuation Requests

Requirements related to SLAMS discontinuations are found at 40 CFR §58.14. Requests for site discontinuation should include the rationale for discontinuing the site, and relevant supporting documentation, such as:

- The design value trend of the site and any nearby site(s) over the most recent 5 years or more
- Any information used to identify the site for discontinuation (e.g. correlations or comparisons with nearby sites, decision matrices, network assessment tools, etc.)
- Documentation of any specific circumstances necessitating the site closure or move (e.g. loss of property access, newly identified siting criteria issues).

Under 40 CFR §58.14(c), requests for SLAMS monitor discontinuation:

...will be approved if any of the following criteria are met and if the requirements of 40 CFR Part 58 Appendix D, if any, continue to be met:

(1) Any PM_{2.5}, O₃, CO, PM₁₀, SO₂, Pb, or NO₂ SLAMS monitor which has shown attainment during the previous five years, that has a probability of less than 10 percent of exceeding 80 percent of the applicable NAAQS during the next three years based on the levels, trends, and variability observed in the past, and which is not specifically required by an attainment plan or maintenance plan

[For information on how to apply the above statistical test, please see the EPA Ambient Air Monitoring Network Assessment Guidance, Section 4.1:

epa.gov/ttnamti1/files/ambient/pm25/datamang/network-assessment-guidance.pdf]

In a nonattainment or maintenance area, if the most recent attainment or maintenance plan adopted by the State and approved by EPA contains a contingency measure to be triggered by an air quality concentration and the monitor to be discontinued is the only

SLAMS monitor operating in the nonattainment or maintenance area, the monitor may not be discontinued.

(2) Any SLAMS monitor for CO, PM₁₀, SO₂, or NO₂ which has consistently measured lower concentrations than another monitor for the same pollutant in the same county (or portion of a county within a distinct attainment area, nonattainment area, or maintenance area, as applicable) during the previous five years, and which is not specifically required by an attainment plan or maintenance plan, if control measures scheduled to be implemented or discontinued during the next five years would apply to the areas around both monitors and have similar effects on measured concentrations, such that the retained monitor would remain the higher reading of the two monitors being compared.

(3) For any pollutant, any SLAMS monitor in a county (or portion of a county within a distinct attainment, nonattainment, or maintenance area, as applicable) provided the monitor has not measured violations of the applicable NAAQS in the previous five years, and the approved SIP provides for a specific, reproducible approach to representing the air quality of the affected county in the absence of actual monitoring data.

(4) A PM_{2.5} SLAMS monitor which EPA has determined cannot be compared to the relevant NAAQS because of the siting of the monitor, in accordance with §58.30.

(5) A SLAMS monitor that is designed to measure concentrations upwind of an urban area for purposes of characterizing transport into the area and that has not recorded violations of the relevant NAAQS in the previous five years, if discontinuation of the monitor is tied to start-up of another station also characterizing transport.

(6) A SLAMS monitor not eligible for removal under any of the criteria in paragraphs (c)(1) through (c)(5) of this section may be moved to a nearby location with the same scale of representation if logistical problems beyond the State's control make it impossible to continue operation at its current site.

Other requests for discontinuation that do not meet any of the above criteria may also be approved on a case-by-case basis if discontinuance does not compromise data collection needed for implementation of a NAAQS and if the requirements of 40 CFR Part 58 Appendix D, if any, continue to be met.

III. Specific Considerations for Relocated Sites

Requests for site relocations should follow the processes described above for the discontinuation of the existing site, and the proposal of the new site. In cases where a site is being relocated out of necessity (e.g. loss of property access) to a nearby location with the same monitoring objective and spatial scale, the discontinuation approval criteria may not apply.

In most cases when a site is relocated, a new AQS site ID should be assigned in order to preserve the metadata associated with the historical data at the previous location. However, EPA will work with agencies on a case-by-case basis if the existing AQS ID is proposed to be retained, or if the submitting agency has an existing practice on how and when to assign AQS IDs. The submitting agency may request EPA approval to calculate combined design values using data from the old and new sites, so that data completeness and assessment of NAAQS compliance are not affected. For ozone monitoring, the EPA may approve such combinations after taking into consideration factors such as distance between sites, spatial and temporal patterns in air quality, local emissions and meteorology, jurisdictional boundaries, and terrain features (Appendix U to 40 CFR Part 50 paragraph 2(c)). EPA may also consider calculating combined design values for other pollutants on a case by case basis.

This document is not intended to apply to site reconfigurations where a sampler platform or probe lines or inlets are moved at an existing site to meet siting criteria. We expect agencies to evaluate their network each year to ensure siting criteria are met, and take the appropriate corrective actions. Evidence that the current configuration of each SLAMS site is in compliance with siting criteria must be included in the annual network plan as required by 40 CFR §58.10(a)(1).

NOTE: This regional policy is not intended to outline new requirements to create extra burden on agencies when submitting documentation for establishing, relocating, or discontinuing a site or monitor. It is intended to consolidate and clarify the existing requirements and the information that should be submitted to EPA when making these type of modifications to your network.