

RAQPAC Notes – EPA Update

5/26/2022 Meeting

Reconsideration of the EPA’s December 2020 Decision to Retain 2012 Particulate Matter (PM) National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS)

In October 2021, EPA developed and released draft *Supplement to the 2019 Integrated Science Assessment for Particulate Matter (External Review Draft – October 2021)* [ISA Supplement report](#) and *Policy Assessment for the Reconsideration of the National Ambient Air Quality Standards for Particulate Matter (External Review Draft – October 2021)* [PA report](#).

The Clean Air Scientific Advisory Committee (CASAC) became involved in the reconsideration process to provide independent advice to the EPA Administrator on the technical bases for EPA’s NAAQS.

On March 18, 2022, the Chartered CASAC PM Panel transmitted two reports to the EPA Administrator. The two reports provide the CASAC PM Panel’s independent expert advice on EPA’s scientific and technical documents supporting the Agency’s reconsideration of the PM NAAQS.

Summary of CASAC PM Panel recommendations to the Administrator:

- Annual avg. PM_{2.5}: Current level of 12.0 ug/m³ is not protective; majority supported range of 8-10 ug/m³, minority supported 10-11 ug/m³
- 24-hour avg. PM_{2.5}: Majority recommended current 35 ug/m³ std. not protective, recommend level of 25-30 ug/m³; minority recommend current std. is protective
- 24-hour primary PM₁₀ and secondary PM₁₀ stds: Recommended retaining (agreed with EPA’s conclusions in policy assessment)
- However, not very prescriptive on secondary std.; Administrator could consider revising secondary standard with respect to visibility

On April 14, 2022, EPA announced the availability of the [“Supplement to the 2019 Integrated Science Assessment for Particulate Matter \(Final\)”](#).

In today’s FR (<https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2022-05-26/pdf/2022-10972.pdf>), EPA announced the availability of the final PA document. EPA is on target to propose its decision on review of the PM NAAQS by Summer 2022 and final decision by Spring 2023. Upon that proposed decision, we’ll have a better representation of the Agency’s consideration of the CASAC PM Panel recommendations.

Reconsideration of the Decision to Retain 2015 Ground-level Ozone NAAQS

On October 29, 2021, EPA announced it will reconsider the 2020 decision to retain the 2015 ozone NAAQS. EPA is targeting December 2023 to complete the reconsideration.

On April 29, 2022, EPA released the public draft document *Policy Assessment for the Reconsideration of the Ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standards, External Review Draft* (Draft PA), prepared as part of the reconsideration of the 2020 decision to retain the ozone NAAQS. Comments must be received on or **before May 31, 2022.**

Link to the April 29, 2022, Federal Register announcement, which provides information on how to submit comments: <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2022-04-29/pdf/2022-09214.pdf>

Link to the Draft PA: https://www.epa.gov/system/files/documents/2022-04/o3_reconsideration_draft_pa-v_final-compressedfinal.pdf

The CASAC Ozone Review Panel previously scheduled meetings on June 8, 10, 13, and 17, to conduct a peer review of the Policy Assessment (PA) for the Reconsideration of the Ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standards (External Review Draft – April 2022). One of EPA’s charge questions asks about the Panel’s views on “EPA’s evaluation of newer studies and its conclusion that they do not materially change the findings of the 2020 ISA or warrant reopening the air quality criteria.” In order to answer this question, it seems that a fuller discussion of the science would first be needed. Additionally, several panel members raised concerns during the meeting on April 29, 2022, about some of the causal determinations made in the 2020 ISA. Therefore, at this stage, the CASAC has decided to pause the review of the PA and use the scheduled meeting on 6/8/22 (and 6/10/22, if needed) for the panel to decide if they would like to have further discussion of the science prior to reviewing the PA. If so, this discussion of the science would take place at a future meeting. So, the meetings on 6/13 and 6/17 are cancelled. For information on how to listen to the meeting, please see <https://casac.epa.gov> and click on “Upcoming Meetings.”

For more information on EPA’s reconsideration of the Decision to Retain the 2012 PM NAAQS, please visit <https://epa.gov/naaqs>

Ozone Determinations of Attainment:

On April 13, 2022, EPA proposed determinations as to whether nonattainment areas under the 2008 and 2015 8-hour ozone NAAQS had attained those standards by the attainment date.

The areas addressed in the 2008 ozone NAAQS proposal are currently classified as “Serious” nonattainment and were required to attain the standards by July 20, 2021. EPA based these determinations on the most recent publicly available and certified ozone monitoring data, from the years 2018-2020. The published Federal Register (FR) proposal is here: <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2022-04-13/pdf/2022-07509.pdf> and a summary fact sheet is available here: <https://www.epa.gov/ground-level-ozone-pollution/2008-ozone-national-ambient-air-quality-standards-naaqs-nonattainment>.

Summary of 2008 ozone NAAQS proposal:

- Deny 1-year extension for Houston attainment date
- Find Houston did not attain by attainment date, reclassify to Severe, SIP revisions due to EPA no later than 18 months after effective date of reclassification to Severe

The areas addressed in the 2015 ozone NAAQS proposal are currently classified as “Marginal” nonattainment and were required to attain the standards by August 3, 2021. EPA based these determinations on the most recent publicly available and certified ozone monitoring data, from the years 2018-2020. The published FR proposal is here: <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2022-04-13/pdf/2022-07513.pdf> and a summary fact sheet is available here: <https://www.epa.gov/ground-level-ozone-pollution/proposed-determinations-attainment-attainment-date-extensions-0>.

Summary of 2015 ozone NAAQS proposal:

- Find Houston did not attain by attainment date, reclassify to Moderate, SIP revisions due to EPA no later than January 1, 2023

The comment period for each proposal closes on June 13, 2022. A virtual hearing was for the proposed actions on May 9, 2022. Information regarding submitting comments and attending the virtual hearings are provided in each FR proposal action.

General Interest:

Final EPA Review of 2021 Design Values – OAQPS sent final 2021 design values for all NAAQS, based on a May 4th data extraction to the regions for review. The anticipated schedule for finalization is:

- 5/9/2022: Final 2021 design values provided to the Regional Offices for review
- 5/20/2022: Regional Offices complete review of the final 2021 design values
- 5/25/2022: Final 2021 design values and new Exceptional Events DV tool posted on the EPA Air Trends website: <https://www.epa.gov/air-trends/air-quality-design-values>

Updated Port Emissions Inventory Guidance – released April 2022, updates/supersedes the September 2020 guidance. Provides some updates to emission factors, equipment operation scenarios, and minor updates to reflect MOVES3, mostly relating to on-road vehicles.

- <https://www.epa.gov/state-and-local-transportation/port-emissions-inventory-guidance>