

# **PROJECTED PM<sub>2.5</sub> ATTAINMENT STATUS OF EACH COUNTY IN THE U.S AND STRATEGIES FOR DEALING WITH NONATTAINMENT DESIGNATIONS AND WITH THE PROPOSED INTERSTATE AIR QUALITY RULE**

**Paper # 452 Air & Waste Management Association Annual Meeting June 2004 Indianapolis, IN**

**Dr. Howard M. Ellis, QEP, Adeel A. Yousuf, Alic Bent, Seema Roy, Rajesh Thotakura, Femi Ogunsola**

Enviroplan Consulting, 81 Two Bridges Road, Fairfield, NJ 07004

**Allen C. Dittenhoefer, Ph.D.**

Enviroplan Consulting, 4500 Valleydale Road Suite 200E, Birmingham, AL 35242

**George Hidy, D.Eng.**

Envair/Aerochem, 6 Evergreen Drive, Placitas, NM 87043

## **ABSTRACT**

Air quality monitoring data collected by state and local government agencies between 1999 and 2002 for fine particulate matter (PM<sub>2.5</sub>) at over 1,200 sites in the U.S. are indicating the prospect of widespread designations of nonattainment of the annual PM<sub>2.5</sub> National Ambient Air Quality Standard (NAAQS) of 15.0 µg/m<sup>3</sup>. U.S. EPA required states to submit their proposed PM<sub>2.5</sub> attainment designations to the agency by February 2004 with the EPA intent on making all attainment designations by December 2004. EPA is also requiring states to submit their State Implementation Plans (SIPs) for attaining the PM<sub>2.5</sub> NAAQS by December 2007 with attainment dates of between 2009 and 2014.

In December 2003, EPA issued a notice with the proposed Interstate Air Quality Rule (IAQR) to address the PM<sub>2.5</sub> and ozone nonattainment problem and the regional haze problem. The proposed IAQR would require a 65% reduction from 2001 SO<sub>2</sub> Allowances for electric utility Affected Units in 29 states to a total of 2.7 million tons per year by 2015. It would also require a reduction in NO<sub>x</sub> Allowances for these same Affected Units to 1.3 million tons per year also by 2015. Interim emission reductions would be required by 2010.

The purpose of this paper is to project the PM<sub>2.5</sub> attainment status of each county in the U.S. based on the most recently available three years (2000-2002) of monitoring data and to discuss strategies for dealing with the expected widespread nonattainment designations including the proposed IAQR.

## INTRODUCTION

On July 18, 1997, U.S. EPA issued new National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for fine particulate matter with an aerodynamic diameter of 2.5 microns or less ( $PM_{2.5}$ )<sup>1</sup>. These standards consist of a  $15 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$  annual average concentration based on a 3-year rolling average and a  $65\text{-}\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$  24-hour concentration based on a 3-year average of the 98<sup>th</sup> percentile of the daily 24-hour concentrations. States were required to establish their  $PM_{2.5}$  monitoring networks by December 1999. In total, over 1,200  $PM_{2.5}$  gravimetric samplers began operation in 1999. In addition, approximately 300  $PM_{2.5}$  speciation samplers were placed into operation throughout the U.S. to collect information on the chemical composition of  $PM_{2.5}$  concentrations.

Table 1 summarizes EPA's current schedule for attaining the  $PM_{2.5}$  NAAQS<sup>2</sup>.

On December 17, 2003, EPA announced the proposed Interstate Air Quality Rule (IAQR), which was published in the Federal Register in January 2004<sup>3</sup>. This proposed rule requires major reductions in  $SO_2$  and  $NO_x$  emissions from electric generating units covered under Title IV of the Clean Air Act (Affected Units) in 29 states in the eastern half of the U.S. These states are listed in Table 2.

In February 2004, states and tribes recommended proposed attainment and nonattainment designations for  $PM_{2.5}$ . EPA is planning to inform states/tribes of intended modifications to these proposed designations by July, 2004. EPA is planning to promulgate the  $PM_{2.5}$  attainment and nonattainment designations in December 2004.

EPA plans to finalize the IAQR by January 2005. States and tribes will be required to submit State Implementation Plans (SIPs) for attaining the  $PM_{2.5}$  NAAQS by December 2007 with plans for attainment of all  $PM_{2.5}$  NAAQS by 2009 to 2014, depending on the area.

These developments will have a major impact on Affected Units in these 29 states, on other existing sources of  $PM_{2.5}$  emissions and on future permitting of new facilities.

Under the proposed IAQR, existing Affected Units in the above 29 states will be subject to  $SO_2$  emission reductions equal to 65% of the  $SO_2$  Allowances of these Affected Units for 2001. Existing Affected Units will also be subject to  $NO_x$  emission reductions equivalent to a resulting annual emission rate equal to an average of 0.125 lbs  $NO_x$  per MMBTU times the maximum annual BTU consumption of the Affected Units in the 29 states over the period 1999-2002. These emission rate reductions must be achieved in two phases ending in 2015. Final emissions are proposed to be 2.7 million tons per year of  $SO_2$  and 1.3 million tons per year for  $NO_x$  for the Affected Units in these 29 states.

EPA proposes to achieve these emission reductions by establishing required emission reductions by state and by giving states the option of satisfying these emission reduction requirements through a 29-state regional cap and trades program and/or through requiring other existing sources to participate in these emission reductions.

New major sources or major modifications to existing sources located in or near PM<sub>2.5</sub> nonattainment areas will also be affected by the PM<sub>2.5</sub> nonattainment designations. These sources will require emission offsets for PM<sub>2.5</sub> or its precursors that equal or exceed the proposed new emissions, the use of Lowest Achievable Emission Rate Control Technology and a demonstration that the proposed new source or modification will not adversely affect air quality as required under 40CFR Part 51.

The purpose of this study is to project the PM<sub>2.5</sub> attainment status of each county in the U.S. based on 2000-2002 PM<sub>2.5</sub> monitoring data and to identify strategies for dealing with the expected widespread nonattainment designations and the proposed Interstate Air Quality Rule.

## **EXTENT AND MAGNITUDE OF THE PROJECTED PM<sub>2.5</sub> NONATTAINMENT DESIGNATIONS**

### **Methodology**

Available PM<sub>2.5</sub> monitoring data clearly indicate that the annual 15 µg/m<sup>3</sup> standard is limiting. Accordingly, in this study we accessed the EPA Air Quality Management System (formerly AIRS) database and reviewed the PM<sub>2.5</sub> annual average concentrations in each U.S. county where monitoring was conducted from 2000 to 2002. We then calculated the 3-year annual average at each PM<sub>2.5</sub> sampler and selected for analysis the single sampler in each county with the highest measured 3-year annual average PM<sub>2.5</sub> concentration. If only two years of monitoring data were available at a site, we used the two-year average for the expected three-year average once three complete years of data are available.

An evaluation of the extent of PM<sub>2.5</sub> nonattainment in each state was made by determining the percent of counties with PM<sub>2.5</sub> samplers projected to be nonattainment. The magnitude of the nonattainment problem in each state was evaluated by 1) determining the *maximum* 3-year annual average PM<sub>2.5</sub> concentration and the percent reduction needed to attain the NAAQS and 2) determining the *average* percent reduction in 3-year annual average PM<sub>2.5</sub> concentration needed to attain the NAAQS averaging over the maximum percent reduction needed in each county which exceeded the standard. All results were sorted by state from highest to lowest percent reduction required.

### **Results**

There are a total of 24 states plus the District of Columbia that have at least one PM<sub>2.5</sub> monitor that exceeded the annual PM<sub>2.5</sub> NAAQS for the period 2000-2002. This conclusion is subject to the qualification that some states had PM<sub>2.5</sub> samplers exceeding the annual NAAQS with only two years of valid monitoring data and others did not satisfy all the requirements for sufficient data collection to be treated as a valid year for making an attainment determination. Nevertheless, these results are indicative of what the monitoring results are expected to be in the next few rolling three-year periods when all monitors do collect three years of valid monitoring data.

These states are listed in Table 3 along with the percentage of counties with PM<sub>2.5</sub> samplers in each state projected to be nonattainment. Table 3 indicates that most of the states projected to have PM<sub>2.5</sub> nonattainment areas are concentrated in the eastern half of the country. Only Montana and California are not east of or bordering the Mississippi River. The percentage of counties with PM<sub>2.5</sub> samplers projected to be nonattainment ranges from 100% (District of Columbia) and 80% (Ohio) to 6% (Arkansas).

For comparison purposes, the proposed IAQR estimates that 19 states plus the District of Columbia are violating the PM<sub>2.5</sub> annual NAAQS based on monitoring data for the period 2000-2002<sup>3</sup>. The additional states estimated to be nonattainment in our independent analyses of this monitoring data are Arkansas, Connecticut, Massachusetts, Missouri and Rhode Island.

Table 4 lists the maximum percent reduction required in annual PM<sub>2.5</sub> concentration for states with the highest measured concentrations. Pennsylvania heads this list with a maximum percent reduction of 56% in York County.

Table 5 summarizes the results of state maximum annual PM<sub>2.5</sub> concentration reductions needed to attain the NAAQS. This table shows that six states require a greater than 25% reduction, 15 states require reductions in the range of 10 to 25%, and four states require less than 10% reductions.

The average percent reductions required in annual PM<sub>2.5</sub> concentration for states with the highest concentrations are listed in Table 6. Only three states require average percentage reductions in their annual average PM<sub>2.5</sub> concentrations of more than 15%. They are California with 27%, Pennsylvania with 23% and Connecticut with 17%.

Table 7 summarizes the results for average percent reductions in annual average PM<sub>2.5</sub> concentrations needed to attain the NAAQS. This table shows that one state requires an average reduction of more than 25%, 14 states require average reductions of from 10% to 25% and ten states require average reductions of less than 10%.

**Table 1.** EPA Current Schedule for Attaining the PM<sub>2.5</sub> National Ambient Air Quality Standards.

<b>Action</b>	<b>Date</b>
EPA proposed Interstate Air Quality Rule	December 2003
States/Tribes recommend proposed attainment and nonattainment designations	February 2004
EPA responds with letters describing intended modifications to the proposed designations	July 2004
EPA finalizes implementation rule	Fall 2004
EPA finalizes attainment and nonattainment designations	December 2004
State/Tribal State Implementation Plans due	December 2007
Attainment dates	2009-2014

**Table 2.** States Requiring SO<sub>2</sub> and NO<sub>x</sub> Emission Reductions Under the Proposed Interstate Air Quality Rule.

Alabama
Arkansas
Connecticut
Delaware
Florida
Georgia
Illinois
Indiana
Iowa
Kansas
Kentucky
Louisiana
Maryland/District of Columbia
Massachusetts
Michigan
Minnesota
Mississippi
Missouri
New Jersey
New York
North Carolina
Ohio
Pennsylvania
South Carolina
Tennessee
Texas
Virginia
West Virginia
Wisconsin

**Table 3.** Percent of counties with PM<sub>2.5</sub> samplers projected to be nonattainment based on 2000-2002 monitoring results.

State	Percent	State	Percent
DC	100	IL	26
OH	80	NC	26
GA	75	NJ	25
WV	69	NY	22
IN	63	CT	20
TN	53	MA	20
KY	53	VA	18
PA	52	MO	12
AL	44	SC	11
MD	43	MI	10
CA	36	MT	8
DE	33	AR	6
RI	33		

**Table 4.** Maximum percent reduction required in annual PM<sub>2.5</sub> concentration for states with the highest concentrations.

State	Percent
PA	56
CA	54
TN	37
OH	34
AL	30
NY	30
IL	25
MI	24

**Table 5.** Summary of results on maximum percent reductions in PM<sub>2.5</sub> concentrations needed to attain the annual NAAQS.

Needed Percent Reduction	Number of States
>25	6
10-25	15
<10	4

**Table 6.** Average percent reduction required in annual PM<sub>2.5</sub> concentration for states with the highest concentrations.

State	Percent
CA	27
PA	23
CT	17
MO	14
DC	14
OH	13
IL	13
MI	13

**Table 7.** Summary of results on average percent reductions in PM<sub>2.5</sub> concentrations needed to attain the annual NAAQS.

Needed Percent Reduction	Number of States
>25	1
10-25	15
<10	16

## **STRATEGIES FOR DEALING WITH PM<sub>2.5</sub> NONATTAINMENT DESIGNATIONS AND THE PROPOSED INTERSTATE AIR QUALITY RULE**

### **Background and Shortcomings of IAQR Approach**

In a previous paper, we suggested a strategy of four steps for dealing with the impending PM<sub>2.5</sub> nonattainment designations<sup>4</sup>. These were: 1) evaluate the validity of the PM<sub>2.5</sub> monitoring data, 2) use spatial averaging for attainment designations, 3) focus on a Secondary-First PM<sub>2.5</sub> control strategy, and 4) focus on a Primary-First PM<sub>2.5</sub> control strategy.

The data reviews and analyses supporting the proposed IAQR make it clear that some combination of primary and secondary emission reductions for PM<sub>2.5</sub> are needed to attain the NAAQS. Primary PM<sub>2.5</sub> emissions are defined as emissions directly emitted from sources in particulate form that do not go through a chemical transformation during transport and that typically are emitted locally. Secondary emissions are defined as PM<sub>2.5</sub> produced from atmospheric gas-to-particle conversion processes typically over long transport distances. Primary PM<sub>2.5</sub> consists mainly of black carbon, organic carbon and various metals. Secondary PM<sub>2.5</sub> consists mainly of sulfates, nitrates, organic carbon, and ammonium.

The major shortcoming of the IAQR approach is that the focus is exclusively on reductions in EGU emissions with their corresponding result of mainly reducing the sulfate fraction of PM<sub>2.5</sub> concentrations. However, the black and organic carbon fractions of PM<sub>2.5</sub> can constitute an

important portion of the total annual average concentrations. For example, Table 8 shows the black and organic carbon fractions of the PM<sub>2.5</sub> annual average concentrations at two PM<sub>2.5</sub> speciation sites near Pittsburgh, PA sponsored by EPA. These sites show that black plus organic carbon represent 31% of the total annual average PM<sub>2.5</sub> concentrations at each site for the period 2000-2002.

Table 5 shows that the maximum percent reduction in annual average PM<sub>2.5</sub> concentration needed to attain the NAAQS is 25% or less from current levels in 21 of the 24 states (plus the District of Columbia) currently projected to have counties that are nonattainment.

As a result, it is important to examine the potential for black carbon and organic carbon emission reductions together with sulfate reductions from EGUs as a starting point for attaining the PM<sub>2.5</sub> NAAQS. For example, improvements in federally mandated average fuel economy standards would reduce carbon emissions from motor vehicles significantly. Further reductions in VOC emissions from stationary sources to make progress towards attaining the 8-hour ozone standard would also reduce the carbon contributions to PM<sub>2.5</sub> concentrations in nonattainment counties.

Until and unless the federal government makes the above changes in its PM<sub>2.5</sub> attainment strategy, we focus on recommending an approach to attaining the PM<sub>2.5</sub> NAAQS that is consistent with current and the proposed federal air pollution regulations.

There are different fractions of primary versus secondary PM<sub>2.5</sub> concentrations at the site in each county with the highest measured annual average PM<sub>2.5</sub> concentration. In addition, the percent reduction in concentration needed to attain the NAAQS varies by county. As a result, the most cost effective combination of primary versus secondary PM<sub>2.5</sub> emission reductions needed to attain the NAAQS will vary by county in each state.

In its analyses supporting the proposed IAQR, EPA projected that in 2010 before any IAQR emission reductions, there will be 17 states plus the District of Columbia with a total of 71 counties nationwide designated as nonattainment for the PM<sub>2.5</sub> annual NAAQS. Only 55 of these counties are east of or bordering the Mississippi River. The other 16 counties are in California (15) and Montana (1).

Consequently, with only 55 counties to conduct a county-specific analyses for as described below, this type of approach should be both feasible and practical.

First, we review EPA's approach to developing the proposed IAQR. We then present our recommended approach for developing cost effective attainment demonstrations for the PM<sub>2.5</sub> annual NAAQS on a county-specific basis.



**Table 8.** Speciation of Annual Average PM<sub>2.5</sub> Concentrations at Two EPA-Sponsored Speciation Sites

	<b>1999-2001 Measured Annual Average Concentration</b>	<b>Mass Fraction</b>
<b>AIRS Site 42-003-0064 (Allegheny County, PA) 1999-2001</b>		
Total PM <sub>2.5</sub>	21.02	1.00
<i>Primary PM<sub>2.5</sub></i>		
Black Carbon	<b>0.86</b>	<b>0.04</b>
Crustal	1.16	0.06
<i>Secondary PM<sub>2.5</sub></i>		
Ammon. Sulfate	10.07	0.48
Ammon. Nitrate	2.73	0.13
<b><i>Organic Carbon Primary &amp; Secondary</i></b>	<b>5.74</b>	<b>0.27</b>
<i>Unknown</i>	0.46	0.02
<b>AIRS Site 42-129-0008 (Westmoreland County, PA) 1999-2001</b>		
Total PM <sub>2.5</sub>	15.6	1.00
<i>Primary PM<sub>2.5</sub></i>		
Black Carbon	<b>0.6</b>	<b>.04</b>
Crustal	0.71	.05
<i>Secondary PM<sub>2.5</sub></i>		
Ammonium Sulfate	7.69	.49
Ammonium Nitrate	1.95	.13
<b><i>Organic Carbon Primary &amp; Secondary</i></b>	<b>4.28</b>	<b>.27</b>
Unknown	0.37	.02

## **EPA's Approach to Developing the IAQR**

EPA's approach to developing the IAQR may be summarized in the following steps <sup>(3)</sup>:

1. Use the annual average speciated PM<sub>2.5</sub> concentrations at the approximately 300 speciation samplers collected in the 2001-2002 time period with an interpolation procedure to project the fraction of the annual average PM<sub>2.5</sub> concentration that is of each speciated compound at each of the approximately 1,200 PM<sub>2.5</sub> samplers.
2. Apply EPA's Regional Modeling System for Aerosols and Deposition (REMSAD)<sup>6</sup> to predict the reduction in PM<sub>2.5</sub> annual average concentration of each speciated compound in each county between the period 2000-2002 (represented by 2001) and the year 2010 after all existing and proposed federal air pollution regulations other than the IAQR have taken effect. Refer to these as the Relative Reduction Factors (RRFs). Repeat this analysis for the period between 2001 and 2015.
3. Based on control technology considerations and the cost per ton of various emission reductions, revise the SO<sub>2</sub> and NO<sub>x</sub> emissions of Affected Units down to the levels discussed under the IAQR.
4. Run the REMSAD Model for all 2010 nonattainment counties and 2015 nonattainment counties using the emission reductions for the Affected Units in Step 3.
5. Give states that contribute "significantly" ( $\geq 0.15 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$  annual average PM<sub>2.5</sub> concentration) to a nonattainment county in a downwind state in 2010 the requirement to reduce SO<sub>2</sub> and NO<sub>x</sub> emissions by the reductions for Affected Units in the respective state proposed in the IAQR.
6. Allow states the options of achieving the specified emission reductions through a regional cap and trade program or by controlling sources in the state other than Affected Units.
7. Summarize the counties remaining in nonattainment and mandate that states develop their own additional air pollution control programs to further reduce concentrations to attain the NAAQS.

## **Recommended Approach for Developing Cost Effective Attainment Demonstrations for the PM<sub>2.5</sub> Annual NAAQS**

The following is our recommended approach for developing cost effective attainment demonstrations for the PM<sub>2.5</sub> annual NAAQS. The approach builds on the approach used by EPA in developing the proposed IAQR but with the goal of developing a more cost effective result by analyzing and determining the emission reduction requirements on a county by county basis using the most cost effective combination of primary and secondary emission controls.

This recommended approach consists of the following steps:

1. Use the projected speciated 2010 annual average PM<sub>2.5</sub> concentrations developed by EPA to divide the PM<sub>2.5</sub> concentrations into a secondary and a primary fraction for the monitor recording

the highest measured annual average concentration in each county for 2010. Procedures for dividing  $PM_{2.5}$  concentrations into primary and secondary fractions are discussed in Dittenhoefer, et.al <sup>4</sup>.

2. For each nonattainment county in 2010, determine the percent reduction in total 2010 annual average  $PM_{2.5}$  concentration needed to attain the NAAQS and identify the percent reduction in primary concentration needed if there were no secondary concentration reduction.

3. Conduct receptor modeling using the Chemical Mass Balance Model Version 8 <sup>5</sup> or other appropriate receptor model to identify the contributions of each major source category to the total measured annual average concentration. This procedure is also discussed in Dittenhoefer et.al.

4. Develop a program of feasible primary emission reductions that are cost effective. This may include installing additional particulate control devices on smaller combustion and process sources, restricting or further restricting open burning, adopting more stringent fugitive particulate emission controls and/or stationary sources of volatile organic compound emissions. Calculate the reduction in primary emissions and with the receptor modeling results the reduction in 2010 highest annual average  $PM_{2.5}$  concentration as a result of implementing these feasible and cost effective emission controls for each nonattainment county in 2010.

5. Calculate the remaining secondary concentration reductions needed to attain the NAAQS for each nonattainment county in 2010. Assemble a statistical summary of the percent reduction in secondary concentration needed to attain the  $PM_{2.5}$  annual NAAQS by nonattainment county in 2010.

6. Based on a review of this statistical summary, decide what percent reduction in secondary concentrations to target as a goal.

7. Assemble the same input data to the REMSAD Model as used by EPA in its proposed IAQR analyses except start with the 2010 emissions level of Affected Units before any reductions under the IAQR.

8. Run the REMSAD Model for various reductions in  $SO_2$  and  $NO_x$  emissions from Affected Units (e.g. 25%, 30%, 35%, etc. reductions in current  $SO_2$  Allowances in 2010) to determine the reduction in secondary  $PM_{2.5}$  concentrations at the monitors with the highest concentration in each nonattainment county.

9. For each county, review the feasible primary emissions and concentration reductions in conjunction with the results of the prior step to decide on the most cost effective combination of primary and secondary  $PM_{2.5}$  emission controls needed to attain the  $PM_{2.5}$  annual NAAQS in each nonattainment county in 2010.

## CONCLUSIONS

There are projected to be widespread PM<sub>2.5</sub> nonattainment designations in 24 states plus the District of Columbia based on an analysis of the PM<sub>2.5</sub> air quality monitoring data collected for the period 2000-2002 at over 1,200 monitor sites.

Existing and planned Federal regulations other than the proposed Interstate Air Quality Rule will by 2010 reduce the number of counties designated as nonattainment and the magnitude of the further concentration reductions needed to attain the NAAQS. However, some combination of secondary PM<sub>2.5</sub> emission controls and primary PM<sub>2.5</sub> emission will be still needed to attain the PM<sub>2.5</sub> NAAQS.

We examine how government agencies can determine the most cost effective combination of secondary (precursor) emissions control versus primary emissions control needed to attain the PM<sub>2.5</sub> NAAQS.

The major shortcomings of the IAQR approach are that the focus is exclusively on reductions in EGU emissions with their corresponding result of mainly reducing the sulfate fraction of PM<sub>2.5</sub> concentrations. However, the black and organic carbon fractions of PM<sub>2.5</sub> can constitute an important portion of the total annual average concentrations.

It is important to examine the potential for black carbon and organic carbon emission reductions together with sulfate reductions from EGUs as a starting point for attaining the PM<sub>2.5</sub> NAAQS. For example, improvements in federally mandated average fuel economy standards would reduce carbon emissions from motor vehicles significantly. Further reductions in VOC emissions from stationary sources to make progress towards attaining the 8-hour ozone standard would also reduce the carbon contributions to PM<sub>2.5</sub> concentrations in nonattainment counties.

Until and unless EPA makes the above changes in its PM<sub>2.5</sub> attainment strategy, we focus on recommending an approach to attaining the PM<sub>2.5</sub> NAAQS that is consistent with current and the proposed federal air pollution regulations.

We propose a county-specific approach for the 55 counties projected to be nonattainment for the PM<sub>2.5</sub> annual NAAQS in 2010 in the eastern half of the U.S. This approach combines various combinations of secondary emission reductions from electric power generation Affected Units and local primary emission reductions based on the basic analysis tools used by EPA to develop the proposed Interstate Air Quality Rule.

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## **KEY WORDS**

Interstate Air Quality Rule

PM<sub>2.5</sub>

Particulate Matter

Primary emissions

Secondary emissions

Attainment

Nonattainment

REMSAD