



U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY - REGION 9

FACT SHEET

**PROPOSED APPROVAL OF
THE CARBON MONOXIDE ATTAINMENT PLAN
FOR THE LAS VEGAS VALLEY
NONATTAINMENT AREA**

APRIL 2006

Today's Announcement

- EPA is today announcing that it is proposing approval, under the Clean Air Act, of the revised *Carbon Monoxide State Implementation Plan, Las Vegas Valley Nonattainment Area, Clark County, Nevada (October 2005)* ("2005 CO plan"), which was submitted to EPA by the State of Nevada as a revision to the Nevada State Implementation Plan (SIP). Our proposed approval is based on our evaluation of the plan submittal and determination that the plan's revised base year and projected emission inventories and modeling demonstration of continued attainment of the CO national ambient air quality standard (NAAQS) reflect acceptable methods and the most recent models and planning assumptions.
- As part of this action, we are proposing to approve new motor vehicle emission budgets that are established in the plan and that reflect scaled inventories which are still consistent with continued attainment of the CO NAAQS in Las Vegas Valley. We are proposing approval on the condition that Clark County and the State of Nevada withdraw the 2030 emission budgets included in the plan, or, in the alternative, EPA will disapprove the plan. EPA cannot approve the 2030 budgets since the plan does not include the 2030

airport micro-scale modeling needed to support 2030 budgets. If, however, the condition is met and the action is otherwise finalized as proposed, this action would replace the existing CO motor vehicle emission budgets with new budgets for the years 2006, 2010, 2015, and 2020.

Background

- There are two federal ambient health-based standards for CO: an 8-hour standard of 9 ppm and a 1-hour standard of 35 ppm. Las Vegas Valley is currently classified as a serious nonattainment area based on monitored violations of the 8-hour CO standard. The area has not exceeded the 1-hour CO standard of 35 ppm since the 1970's. The 8-hour standard has not been violated since 1998. The Las Vegas area's deadline for attaining the CO standard was December 31, 2000.
- By means of notice-and-comment rulemaking, EPA approves attainment plans when they meet the applicable Clean Air Act requirements. In 2004, EPA approved all of the elements of the *Carbon Monoxide State Implementation Plan, Las Vegas Valley Nonattainment Area, Clark County, Nevada (August 2000)* ("2000 CO plan"), except for the contingency measures. (EPA's 2005 finding of attainment for Las Vegas Valley with respect to the CO standard obviates the need to approve the contingency measures.) The 2000 CO plan demonstrated that attainment would be reached by December 31, 2000 and maintained through 2020. The 2000 CO plan also established motor vehicle emissions budgets for 2000, 2010, and 2020. The 2005 CO plan updates certain elements of the 2000 CO plan, including the emissions inventories, the modeling demonstration of continued attainment, and motor vehicle emissions budgets.

Las Vegas Air Quality

- In June 2005, EPA made a finding that the Las Vegas Valley nonattainment area had attained the CO NAAQS by the applicable attainment date (2000). (This finding of attainment removed the Clean Air Act requirement for the area to develop contingency measures.) There are presently no monitored exceedances of the CO health-based standard, which is 9 ppm averaged over 8 hours. Las Vegas Valley has experienced no exceedances from 1999 to the present. The number of exceedances of the CO NAAQS has decreased from over 40 per year in the 1980's to less than 3 per year in late 1990's. The severity of violations has also decreased, from a high value of 21 ppm in 1981 to a high value of 7.3 ppm in 2000. The last exceedances of the 8-hour CO NAAQS, 10.3 ppm and 10.1 ppm, occurred in 1998 at the Sunrise Avenue site in Las Vegas.
- The improved air quality is the direct result of Nevada's and Clark County's implementation of controls to reduce CO emissions, as well as tighter federal motor

vehicle emission standards. The key State and county controls in the Las Vegas area include wintertime gasoline rules, the vehicle inspection and maintenance program, an alternative fuel vehicle program, and voluntary rideshare programs. Numerous pollution reduction measures are also in place for industrial and commercial sources. The State of Nevada and Clark County will need to continue to implement these controls in order to maintain clean air.

Impact of CO on Public Health

- CO is a pollutant generated primarily by mobile sources, cars and trucks. Major sources of combustion, like power plants, can also generate CO. CO affects people's health by entering the bloodstream and reducing oxygen delivery to the body's organs and tissues. Exposure to elevated levels of CO may cause loss of visual perception and manual dexterity, as well as fatigue, chest pains, and breathing difficulties. Extreme exposures can cause loss of consciousness and even death.
- Young children, senior citizens, pregnant women and people with asthma or heart and lung problems are especially susceptible to the effects of CO pollution.

What Happens Next?

- The next step after the 2005 finding of attainment is the redesignation process. Before an area can be redesignated to attainment, the State must submit and EPA must approve a maintenance plan showing, among other things, that the area will continue to maintain the standard for a 10-year period.
- We understand that Clark County intends to prepare a maintenance plan for CO in 2007. Following adoption by the County, the State of Nevada needs to submit the maintenance plan to EPA with a request and justification to redesignate Las Vegas Valley to attainment for the CO NAAQS.

Additional Information

- A copy of the proposed approval is available in the Air Programs section of the EPA Region IX's website: www.epa.gov/region09/air/vegasco/.
- EPA will publish its proposed approval notice in the Federal Register. A 30-day comment period will commence on the date of publication. Comments may be mailed, faxed or e-mailed to EPA.
- For more information, please call Amy Zimpfer, Associate Director, Air Division, U.S.

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