UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION 5
77 WEST JACKSON BOULEVARD
CHICAGO, IL 60604-3590

REPLY TO THE ATTENTION OF:

AUG 05 2003

R-19J

Honorable Rod Blagojevich
Governor of Illinois
Springfield, Illinois 62706

Dear Governor Blagojevich:

Thank you for the July 16, 2003, letter from your Environmental Director submitting Illinois' recommendations on air quality designations for the national health based standard for ground-level ozone, a major constituent of smog. Illinois' recommendations for the 8-hour ozone standard are important in providing citizens with critical information about air pollution levels in their communities.

We intend to carefully review the recommendations and work with Illinois in determining final ozone nonattainment areas and their boundaries. Once we have completed our review of the submittal, we will inform you prior to December 15, 2003, by letter, of any modifications we plan to make. December 15, 2003, is 120 days prior to when we will publish the final ozone designations and our response letter to you will fulfill a Clean Air Act requirement for promulgation of the ozone designations. Illinois will have the opportunity to respond to our suggested modifications. We will issue final designations no later than April 15, 2004.

We look forward to working with Illinois to develop designations for the 8-hour ozone standard. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Very truly yours,

Thomas V. Skinner
Regional Administrator

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