

June 12, 2002

MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: Annual Air Quality Data Certifications for PM and O₃ Design Values

FROM: J. David Mobley, Acting Director
Emissions, Monitoring, and Analysis Division (C304-02)

TO: Addressees

I want to call to your attention the need for each State, Tribal, and local air monitoring agency to provide their ambient air quality data and the associated certifications for the 2001 calendar year.

By July 1, 2002, each data reporting agency is required to provide their 2001 State and Local Air Monitoring Stations (SLAMS) data certification to the EPA (ref. 40 CFR 58.26). This certification process tells the Agency that the previous year's data have been completely entered into the Air Quality System (AQS) and that the summary report is accurate to the best of the agencies' knowledge. These reviews and certifications are particularly important this year as we begin to identify PM_{2.5}, ozone, and PM₁₀ design value concentrations.

I also direct your attention to certain issues that will become very important for NAAQS designation activities. The OAQPS has provided a listing of draft design values for PM_{2.5}, PM₁₀, and O₃ to Regional monitoring and implementation staff for review and comment with State and local air monitoring agencies. It is imperative that the air quality data in the AQS be as complete and accurate as possible. I want to highlight certain data review activities related to the 2001 data set certification and the upcoming designation process that you will need to consider.

PM_{2.5}, PM₁₀, and O₃ data availability. Please ensure that all valid air quality data for 1999 through 2001 are reviewed and entered into the AQS before July 1, 2002.

Data review and flags. Please review the AQS data for data entry errors, maximum values, missing values, and data flags. Where exceptional event flags are used, please review the monitoring agencies' information supporting such flags, and place any necessary concurrence flags into the AQS. Document any nonconcurrences for use in later discussions related to area designations.

Sampling frequencies. For PM data, please review the sampling frequency information that is currently in the AQS (e.g., daily, 1in3, 1in6, or seasonal variations). These sampling frequencies play an important role in interpreting data for the PM NAAQS comparisons. Mark Schmidt, of my staff, has provided the Regional Office Monitoring Contacts with a listing of specific sites where this information must be verified.

Sites ineligible for comparison to the annual PM_{2.5} standard. The PM_{2.5} regulations specify that certain microscale or middle scale sites (e.g., localized hot spots) are not eligible for comparison to the annual NAAQS [40 CFR 58 Appendix D, §2.8.1.2.3]. Please identify any sites subject to this criterion.

Monitoring plans that include spatial averaging approaches. If an agency has indicated its intention to pursue spatial averaging approaches for PM_{2.5} NAAQS interpretations, those agencies should have identified the group of monitoring sites to be averaged. Please review those specific monitoring plans and annual State air monitoring reports, as they will be important to understand in determining the correct design values for those locations, and then provide us the specific monitors that are part of the optional spatial averaging zone.

In summary, please provide Mark Schmidt with any corrections to the PM_{2.5} sampling frequencies, a listing of the sites ineligible for comparison to the annual PM_{2.5} standard, and any sites designated for optional spatial averaging by June 30.

I appreciate and thank you for the considerable efforts to obtain these data and to enter them into the AQS. If there are any issues in this regard, please contact me at 919-541-4676.

Addressees:

Deputy Director, Office of Ecosystem Protection, Region I
Director, Environmental Planning and Protection Division, Region II
Director, Air Protection Division, Region III
Director, Air, Pesticides, and Toxics Management Division, Region IV
Acting Director, Air and Radiation Division, Region V
Director, Multimedia Planning and Permitting Division, Region VI
Director, Air, RCRA and Toxics Division, Region VII
Director, Air and Radiation Program, Region VIII
Director, Air Division, Region IX
Director, Office of Air, Region X
Acting Director, Office of Environmental Measurement and Evaluation, Region I
Director, Environmental Services and Assessment Division, Region II

Director, Environmental Services Division, Regions III and VII
Director, Science & Ecosystems Support Division, Region IV
Director, Resource Management Division, Region V
Assistant Regional Administrator, Management Division, Region VI
Assistant Regional Administrator, Office of Technical and Management
Services, Region VIII
Assistant Regional Administrator, Office of Policy and Management, Region IX
Director, Office of Environmental Assessment, Region X

cc: Regional Office NAMS Coordinators
Regional Office AQS Contacts
Bill Becker, STAPPA/ALAPCO
Annabelle Allison, Tribal Air Monitoring Support Center
Greg Budd, Tribal Air Monitoring Support Center
Lee Byrd, OAQPS/EMAD
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