



Resolution Number 07-8
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Sun Valley, Idaho

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Sausalito, California

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Arlington, Virginia

As certified by
R. Steven Brown
Executive Director

ON THE NEED TO ENSURE THAT UP-TO-DATE, PROTECTIVE NATIONAL AMBIENT AIR QUALITY STANDARDS AND IMPLEMENTATION RULES ARE TIMELY PROMULGATED AND IMPLEMENTED

WHEREAS, the Clean Air Act (CAA) requires the United States Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) to set primary and secondary National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for carbon monoxide, lead, nitrogen dioxide, particulate matter, ozone, and sulfur dioxide (criteria pollutants) that, “allowing an adequate margin of safety”, are requisite to protect public health and welfare, and to review and revise the standards, as appropriate, every five years; and

WHEREAS, since the NAAQS program was established in 1970, there has been ample scientific evidence demonstrating harm to public health in parts of the country from exposure to ambient concentrations of criteria pollutants, particularly to children, the elderly, asthmatics, and other sensitive populations; and

WHEREAS, the U.S. EPA has determined that existing criteria pollutant levels in certain areas of the country have adverse effects on public welfare, including reduced forest growth and crop yield and degraded scenic vistas; and

WHEREAS, the Environmental Council of the States (ECOS) recognizes the collective progress made by states in reducing levels of all criteria pollutants and their precursors in the ambient air; and

WHEREAS, ECOS further recognizes that many states and local agencies throughout the country have struggled to meet their obligations to attain various NAAQS, and are facing significant resource constraints, given the current economic situation; and

WHEREAS, State Implementation Plans (SIPs) are key to achieving ambient air quality standards and a SIP Reform Workgroup comprised of representatives of ECOS, the National Association of Clean Air Agencies, and U.S. EPA has been working together to identify SIP reforms that would streamline and improve the SIP process through the development and issuance of more timely NAAQS implementation guidance and other measures.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE ENVIRONMENTAL COUNCIL OF THE STATES:

Urges U.S. EPA to reassess, as required by the Clean Air Act, and revise as appropriate, existing NAAQS in order to ensure that NAAQS reflect current scientific information;

Further urges U.S. EPA, after giving serious consideration to the recommendations of U.S. EPA's appointed independent scientific review committee, to set all new or revised NAAQS at levels that provide an adequate margin of safety to public health;

Calls on U.S. EPA to consider all relevant, well-conducted studies when setting new or revised NAAQS standards;

Urges U.S. EPA to make all underlying data used to develop a proposed NAAQS easily accessible to the public;

Urges U.S. EPA to work with states to identify needed SIP process improvements and methods for effecting them, and to revise the SIP process so as to foster cost-effective, efficient, and multi-pollutant NAAQS implementation strategies and;

Calls on U.S. EPA and U.S. Congress to recognize the state and local agency resources needed to implement the programmatic changes necessary to meet new and revised NAAQS;

Urges U.S. EPA to work closely with states as it develops and promulgates national rules that directly limit NAAQS pollution from categories of sources to balance the need for states to retain flexibility within their programs with the need for states to effectively and expeditiously meet new or revised NAAQS.

Calls on U.S. EPA to collaborate closely with states, using lessons from the SIP Reform Workgroup, to develop guidance and the implementation rule for new or revised NAAQS and issue a proposed implementation rule concurrent with the final NAAQS promulgation;

Encourages U.S. EPA, to the best of its ability, to better align compliance dates for rules that reduce the same or different pollutants from the same source sectors; and

Urges U.S. EPA to work in partnership with states and local agencies to develop methodologies and enhance existing tools to educate and warn sensitive populations about the health effects of exposure to criteria pollutants during periods of high concentration.