

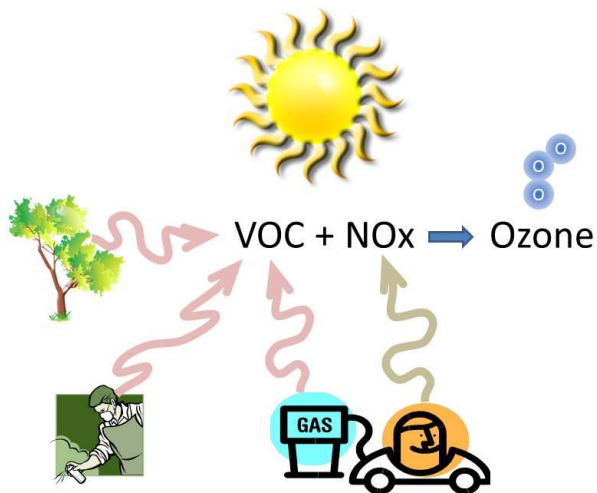
**NACAA Factsheet for
EPA's Final Ozone Standard due out October 1, 2015
(as of September 29, 2015)**

EPA is proposing to revise the ozone standard. So, what does that mean?

What is ozone and why do we care about it?

Breathing in ground-level ozone can trigger a variety of health problems including chest pain, coughing, and throat irritation. It can worsen bronchitis, emphysema, and asthma. Ground-level ozone also can reduce lung function and inflame the linings of the lungs. Repeated exposure may permanently scar lung tissue. Even small amounts in the air can have harmful effects.

[Tailor this next sentence to an area's emissions as appropriate] Ozone is formed when chemicals from tailpipes and smokestacks react with sunlight. That's why ozone levels are at their highest during the summer in most parts of the country. Summertime is also when people are more active and spend more time outdoors, resulting in increased ozone exposure.



Can ozone be both good and bad?

Ozone can have good or bad effects, depending on where it's located in the atmosphere.

Close to the Earth's surface, ground-level or "bad" ozone is harmful to breathe and it damages crops, trees and other vegetation. It is a main ingredient of urban smog. High up in the atmosphere, stratospheric or "good" ozone protects life on Earth from the sun's harmful ultraviolet (UV) rays.

One way to remember whether ozone is "good" or "bad" for us is, "good up high, bad nearby."

Why did EPA release a new standard now?

Under the Clean Air Act passed by Congress, EPA is required to review the health standards for certain pollutants every five years. As part of that review, the agency convenes a group of independent scientific advisors, called CASAC (Clean Air Scientific Advisory Committee) to review the latest health information and make a recommendation.

Most recently, CASAC has advised EPA that the current standard of 75 parts per billion (ppb) is not fully protective of public health and recommended a new stricter standard between 60 and 70 ppb. The Committee also expressed concerns that setting the standard at the high end of that range (70 ppb) might not provide an “adequate margin of safety” as required by the Clean Air Act.

[This paragraph will need to be revised when the standard is announced; we may want to consider dropping the “adequate margin of safety” clause depending on where the standard is set.]

What happens next?

State and local clean air agencies must now review their air quality data to see if the areas they serve are in compliance with the new standard. EPA will then review the state recommendations and designate areas as either in compliance or not. Areas that are not in compliance (called nonattainment areas) are required to meet the standard as soon as possible. How long an area has to clean up the air is based on how severe its ozone pollution problem is.

What is the effect of being in ‘nonattainment?’

Besides the impacts on people’s health, areas that are out of compliance will need to develop comprehensive planning processes for attaining the standard by the deadline. Those plans will need to be developed in partnership with all sectors of the local economy – commercial, industrial and transportation – as well as the general public and in some cases neighboring states.

Optional Additional Effects

In addition, being in nonattainment may, in some cases requires stricter pollution controls on sources of the chemicals that cause ozone pollution. This results in higher costs for the additional air pollution controls required, as well as costs for emission offsets for major new sources. There may also be additional costs associated with vehicle emissions inspection programs in the nonattainment area.

Added Option 1:

What can concerned citizens do to help reduce ozone pollution?

We can all take steps to help reduce the chemicals that cause ozone to form. Conserving electricity at home and at work; carpooling, riding your bike or taking public

transit; avoiding excess idling and keeping your car well maintained can all help and, in the long run, may save you money.

Added Option 2:

What are the health benefits of reducing ozone pollution?

Researchers estimate that nearly 8,000 premature ozone-related deaths, about 1 million lost school days, and up to 3 million cases of acute respiratory symptoms could be avoided annually if the ozone standard is set in the range of 70-60 ppb.

Added Option 3:

Does EPA look at the costs of a new standard?

Under the Clean Air Act, (as reaffirmed by a unanimous Supreme Court decision), EPA cannot consider the costs when setting the ozone standard. Costs are considered when state and local air pollution control agencies develop regulatory strategies to meet the standards.

Over the last 40 years, the benefits of clean air standards from reduced loss of life, increased productivity and reduced health care costs have far outweighed the costs of cleaning the air.

EPA estimates that by 2025, the value of health benefits from the new ozone standard would exceed \$6.4 to \$13 billion annually for an ozone standard of 70 ppb and \$19 to \$38 billion annually for a standard of 65 ppb.

Added Option 3a: Add this to Option 3:

While some groups have complained about the costs of air pollution standards, there is a history of innovation under the Clean Air Act. This consistently results in much lower costs of compliance than projected by industry groups when the standards are first proposed or released.

Added Option 4:

Where can I learn more about ozone?

Link to state or local agency

<http://www3.epa.gov/airquality/ozonepollution/>