

Air Quality and Transportation Conformity Highlights Spring 2013

*Prepared by the Office of Natural Environment
Federal Highway Administration*

Announcements and Recent Events

FHWA Released Interim Guidance on CMAQ Operating Assistance Under MAP-21. On June 10 2013, FHWA released interim guidance that focused specifically on operating assistance under the CMAQ program and MAP-21. The interim guidance will give project sponsors the ability to spend 3 years of operating assistance over a 5 year period (extended from the current 3 years) while the total operating assistance would still be capped at a 3 year level. The interim guidance is available on FHWA's [MAP-21 website](#) and the [CMAQ website](#). Contact Mike Koontz at (202) 366-2076 or michael.koontz@dot.gov with any questions.

Air Quality Planning Web Course Now Available. Two new courses have been added to the Air Quality Planning web-based training series designed for transportation practitioners: State Implementation Plan (SIP) and Transportation Control Measure (TCM) Requirements and Policies (FHWA-NHI-142069) and Transportation Conformity (FHWA-NHI-142071). The first course in the series, Clean Air Act Overview (FHWA-NHI-142068) is also available. All courses are free. For more information, visit www.nhi.fhwa.dot.gov, search Air Quality Planning or look for the specific course number. Please contact Karen Perritt karen.perritt@dot.gov with any questions or comments.

FHWA Released 2008 8-Hour Ozone Frequently Asked Questions. On May 14, 2013, FHWA released a set of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) related to implementing the 2008 8-hour ozone NAAQS. These FAQs address when conformity applies to the metropolitan transportation plan and TIP and at the project level; transitioning from the 1997 to 2008 ozone standard for areas in nonattainment or maintenance for both; and how the planning process will be impacted by the transition to/from attainment. These FAQs were developed to respond to these and other questions we have received about the 2008 8-hour ozone NAAQS. These FAQs are available on [FHWA's website](#).

FHWA Posted Two New Reports. The first report is [Improving Vehicle Fleet, Activity, and Emissions Data for On-Road Mobile Sources Emissions Inventories](#). This report investigates several modeling concepts and methodologies in the MOVES emissions model and explores new data sources and new methods for utilizing existing data sources to improve the emission inventory and analysis of on-road mobile sources.

The second report, [FHWA and EPA National Near-Road Study, Las Vegas, NV](#) provides a summary of a field study conducted in Las Vegas from mid-December 2008 thru mid-December 2009. The objective of this study was to determine Mobile Source Air Toxic (MSAT) concentrations and variations in concentrations as a function of distance from the highway and

to establish relationships between MSAT concentrations as related to highway traffic, meteorological conditions; and other pollutants primarily emitted from motor vehicles.

EPA Released the Notice of Proposed Rule Making for the 2008 Ozone Implementation Rule. The EPA is proposing a [rule for implementing the 2008 ozone national ambient air quality standards](#) (NAAQS) (the “2008 ozone NAAQS”) that were promulgated on March 12, 2008. This proposed rule addresses a range of state implementation plan requirements for the 2008 ozone NAAQS, including requirements pertaining to attainment demonstrations, reasonable further progress (RFP), reasonably available control technology (RACT), reasonably available control measures (RACM), new source review (NSR) requirements in nonattainment areas, emission inventories, and the timing of state implementation plan (SIP) submissions and of compliance with emission control measures in the SIP. Other issues also addressed in this proposed rule are the revocation of the 1997 ozone NAAQS and anti-backsliding requirements that would apply when the 1997 ozone NAAQS is revoked. EPA established a sixty (60) day comment period for this action, which ends on August 5, 2013. More information is available on EPA’s [ozone implementation website](#).

EPA Proposed Tier 3 Vehicle Emissions and Fuel Standards. On May 21, 2013, EPA issued in the [Federal Register](#) a proposed rule to reduce air pollution from passenger cars and trucks. Starting in 2017, Tier 3 would set new vehicle emissions standards and lower the sulfur content of gasoline. The proposed tailpipe standards include different phase-in schedules that vary by vehicle class but generally phase in between model years 2017 and 2025. In addition to the gradual phase-in schedules, other proposed flexibilities include credits for early compliance and the ability to offset some higher-emitting vehicles with extra-clean models. EPA is also proposing that federal gasoline contain no more than 10 parts per million (ppm) of sulfur on an annual average basis by January 1, 2017. Comments on this proposed rule must be received on or before June 13, 2013. More information is available on [EPA’s website](#).

EPA Released Guidance for Area Designations for the 2012 Annual PM_{2.5} NAAQS. On April 16, 2013, EPA issued [guidance](#) that provides information on the schedule and process for initially designating areas for the 2012 Annual PM_{2.5} NAAQS. Also included in the guidance are important factors that the EPA intends to evaluate in making final nonattainment area boundary decisions for this standard. Visit [EPA’s Designation Guidance and Data website](#) for more information.

Reminders

FHWA Releases Annual Fiscal Tables. The FHWA Chief Financial Officer has released the FY 2013 Supplementary Tables, providing detailed information on the year’s apportionments covering all the major elements of the Federal-aid Highway Program. Of note to the transportation-environmental community, Table 13 breaks down the State-by-State apportionment of the CMAQ program, including the flexible funds available to minimum apportionment States, and the new priority set-aside created by MAP-21 for PM_{2.5} areas. The tables are available on the agency’s [Legislation & Regulations](#) website.

MAP-21 Highlights on Agency Websites. Presentations, questions & answers, and other vital information surrounding the legislation remain on FHWA's web pages. Both the CMAQ webinar presented in September and the Qs&As can be found on the [MAP-21 website](#). Basic fiscal information is housed on the MAP-21 site as well, although the supplementary tables with more detailed breakdowns on the individual Federal-aid programs are found on the agency's [Laws and Regulations](#) page.

One year Conformity Determinations Grace Period for 2008 Ozone NAAQS Ends July 20, 2013. Conformity determinations on transportation plans and TIPs of the 2008 Ozone areas are due by July 20, 2013, one year after the effective date of the nonattainment designation. Also, since EPA revoked the 1997 ozone NAAQS for transportation conformity, conformity for the 1997 ozone NAAQS will no longer apply after July 20, 2013. . For more information, go to: (1) [2008 Ozone NAAQS Classification Final Rule](#), (2) [2008 Ozone NAAQS Designations Final Rule](#) and (3) [EPA 2008 Ozone NAAQS Website](#)

EPA Revised Particulate Matter Standard. On December 14, 2012, EPA finalized changes to the particulate matter (PM) national ambient air quality standards (NAAQS). EPA lowered the primary annual PM_{2.5} standard from 15 µg/m³ to 12 µg/m³. The 24-hour PM_{2.5} standards were retained at 35 µg/m³ as were the 24-hour PM₁₀ standard (150 µg/m³). EPA did not finalize the proposed new secondary standard intended to address visibility. EPA also took action to require near road monitors in areas with a population over 1 million (to be co-located with NO₂ near road monitors). EPA expects initial nonattainment designations in December 2014, effective early 2015. Areas will have five years to attain the standard (2020). Transportation conformity will be required in the newly designated nonattainment areas for the revised PM standards one year after the effective date of designations. For more information, visit [EPA's website](#).

Training Opportunities

Conformity 101 Training Available On-Line. FHWA made a short course entitled "What is Conformity?" available on-line. This course is intended for transportation and air quality practitioners who are new to transportation conformity, those looking for a refresher, or others who only need a brief overview of the rule. The session is approximately 27 minutes long. Handouts are available for download at the same site. This course can be accessed on [FHWA's website](#).

MySQL Training for MOVES Model Users. Two new training opportunities are now available for MOVES model users. A three-hour webinar provides an introduction to MySQL Query Browser and MOVES interface. A six-hour training over two days will enable users to do MySQL programming and to write his/her own MySQL scripts and to manipulate MySQL databases including MOVES input and outputs. For more information or to schedule training, contact John Byun (Joon.Byun@dot.gov) or Paul Heishman (Paul.Heishman@dot.gov).

FHWA Resource Center Training Activities. FHWA's Resource Center Air Quality Technical Services Team is available to offer MOVES training and information is available at the [Resource Center website](#).

EPA and DOT PM Hotspot Quantitative Analyses Training Scheduled. EPA and DOT have jointly developed a three-day training course on conducting quantitative PM hot-spot analysis using MOVES, and CAL3QHCR and AERMOD air quality dispersion models. Detailed information about this course and training materials and agenda can be found at: [PM Hotspot Quantitative Analyses Training](#).

EPA and FHWA Offer Two-Day MOVES2010 Training Course. EPA and FHWA have jointly developed a two-day training course on the MOVES2010 model that will be taught at various locations over the coming months. This is a detailed, two-day, hands-on course geared toward state and local agency staff that will use MOVES2010 for developing SIPs and conformity analyses. For additional information on the two-day training sessions, visit [EPA's MOVES training website](#). The materials needed for the course are posted on the [MOVES training site](#).

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Past issues are available on [FHWA's website](#). If you have any suggestions for future highlights, please email victoria.martinez@dot.gov.