

Air Quality and Transportation Conformity Highlights

March, 2012

Prepared by the Office of Natural Environment
Federal Highway Administration

Announcements and Recent Events

President Signs 90-day Extension of Federal Highway and Transit Programs. On March 30, President Obama signed a 90-day extension of federal highway and transit programs. The measure, (H.R. 4281: Surface Transportation Extension Act of 2012) also continues the flow of motor fuel taxes, heavy-duty truck, and truck tire taxes into the Highway Trust Fund. This ninth extension of SAFETEA-LU expires on June 30, 2012. The full Senate recently approved S. 1813, a two-year \$109 billion extension of surface transportation programs and the House has proposed a five-year \$260 billion reauthorization. Both Senate and House members have agreed to continue advancing legislation after the two-week Easter break. For more information, see: [H.R. 4281](#).

Continuation of the CMAQ 100 percent Federal Share Flexibility. The Energy Independence & Security Act of 2007 amended Title 23 to provide a temporary full Federal share (at 100 percent) for CMAQ projects obligated in Fiscal Years 2008 and 2009. This increased Federal share will continue to apply to CMAQ projects during the most recent SAFETEA-LU extension (see article above). In practice, the Federal share flexibility is continued as it was on September 30, 2009, when SAFETEA-LU expired. Any questions related to the CMAQ program should be directed to [Mike Koontz](#) at (202)366-2076.

EPA Releases Revised Version of MOVES. EPA released a revised version of MOVES, known as MOVES2010b, together with updated guidance documents and a list of questions and answers on April 23, 2012. According to EPA, MOVES2010b is a minor revision to MOVES2010, and therefore will not restart the grace period before the model is required for conformity purposes. To download MOVES2010b and to obtain copies of updated policy and technical guidance documents, go to [EPA's MOVES website](#).

EPA Posts Transportation Conformity Regulations Including Restructuring Amendments and MOVES Grace Period Extension. On April 13, 2012, EPA posted on their website the revised transportation conformity regulations that include the two recent amendments to the transportation conformity rule. The amendments included: (1) restructured two sections of the rule to ensure that requirements apply to new or revised NAAQS, and (2) the 12-month extension of the MOVES2010 grace period for regional emissions analysis. A copy of the revised transportation conformity regulations is available at: [Final Conformity Regulation April 2012](#).

EPA Releases Final Guidance on Ozone Advance Program and Announces Webinar. EPA recently released the final guidance for Ozone Advance. This new, voluntary EPA program encourages ozone attainment and maintenance areas to take near-term steps to improve air quality. Actions undertaken as part of the program could result in air quality improvements that provide a buffer against future violations of the standard. Participation in Ozone Advance does not relieve areas of any requirements of the Clean Air Act. EPA will hold a webinar on Ozone Advance on April 24 at 2:00-3:00 pm eastern time. To register, go to: [Ozone Advance Program Webinar](#). To find out more about the program and which areas are eligible to apply, see: [Ozone Advance](#).

EPA Releases Report on Black Carbon. In accordance with a request from Congress, EPA recently released a report on emissions of black carbon. Black carbon in the United States comes primarily from diesel engines and due to new clean diesel programs and technologies, the U.S. will significantly reduce black carbon between now and 2030. The study summarizes available scientific information on the current and future impacts of BC, and evaluates the effectiveness of available BC mitigation approaches and technologies for protecting climate and public health. For more information, see: [EPA Report to Congress: Black Carbon](#).

EPA Finalizes Secondary NAAQS for Nitrogen Oxides (NOx) and Sulfur Oxides (SOx). EPA recently decided to keep the current secondary NOx and SOx NAAQS. The secondary standard for NOx is 0.053 parts per million (ppm) averaged over a year and the standard for SOx is 0.5 ppm averaged over three hours and not to be exceeded more than once per year. EPA indicates that since 1920 levels of NOx and SOx have been reduced more than 50 and 80 percent, respectively. For more information on the Final Rule, see: [NOx and SOx Secondary NAAQS](#).

TRB Transportation and Air Quality Committee Summer Meeting. The mid-year meeting of the TRB Air Quality and Transportation Committee (ADC20) will be held in Little Rock, Arkansas from June 24-27. The meeting is jointly sponsored by the Environmental Analysis in Transportation Committee (ADC10) and the Ecology and Transportation Committee (ADC30). For more information, visit [TRB Environmental Summer Meeting](#).

Reminders

EPA Releases Implementation Guidance for 2006 24-Hour Fine Particle Standard. On March 5, 2012, the EPA released implementation guidance for the 2006 PM2.5 NAAQS. The document provides guidance on developing State Implementation Plans (SIPs) to demonstrate compliance with this NAAQS. SIPs for the [areas designated nonattainment for this standard in 2009](#) are due by December 14, 2012. The guidance covers most aspects of implementation of the 2006 24-hour PM2.5 NAAQS and how it is similar to or different from the implementation of the 1997 PM2.5 NAAQS. A discussion concerning on-road inventories and motor vehicle emissions budgets is included. A copy of the guidance can be found at: <http://www.epa.gov/ttn/oarpg/t1pgm.html>

EPA Issues Proposed Rule to Implement 2008 Ozone Standard. On February 14, 2012 EPA issued a Proposed Rule on the implementation of the 2008 ozone standard of 0.075 ppm. The Proposed Rule includes thresholds at which nonattainment areas would be classified as marginal, moderate, serious, severe, or extreme, and proposes to revoke the 1997 ozone standard for the purposes of transportation conformity. EPA estimates that 52 areas will be designated as nonattainment under the 2008 ozone standard when the agency makes its final designations, which is scheduled for no later than May 31, 2012. Of the 52 areas, EPA expects that 43 areas will be classified as marginal nonattainment areas. Comments on the Proposed Rule were due by March 15, 2012. For more information, see: [2008 Ozone NAAQS Implementation](#).

Mark Your Calendar for NTAQS 2012. The Northern Transportation Air Quality Summit (NTAQS) 2012 will be held in Philadelphia in August 2012. This year's summit will be co-sponsored with FHWA, EPA's Region 1, 2, and 3 Offices, and the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission. Topics cover issues such as regulations and their impacts to the region, analysis and modeling requirements, climate change, programs such as CMAQ and other topics related to transportation and air quality. The summit also will provide some opportunities for training on policy or technical topics. For more information contact Kevin Black at 410-962-2177 or Kevin.Black@dot.gov.

EPA Releases Draft Near-road NO2 Technical Assistance Document. On December 22, 2011 the EPA released an updated draft of the Near-road NO2 Technical Assistance Document to assist stakeholders with the planning and siting processes for implementation of the Near-road NO2 monitoring requirements that were announced in February 2010. The latest draft reflects comments from the Clean Air Scientific Advisory Committee (CASAC) and federal, state, and local stakeholders. For more information, see: [EPA Near-road NO2 TAD](#). The EPA also posted the results of the Near-road NO2 Monitoring Pilot Study which can be found at: [EPA Near-road NO2 Pilot Study](#).

MOVES/EMFAC 2-year Grace Period for Hot-Spot Analyses Started December 20, 2010. To access the Federal Register notice, guidance documents, and fact sheets, go to: [EPA's Project Level Conformity](#).

MOVES2010's 24-Month Grace Period for Regional Conformity Analysis extended to March 2, 2013. For more information, see [EPA's website](#), and the [MOVES website](#).

Training Opportunities

National Transit Institute Introduction to Transportation Conformity Course Scheduled. The NTI course, Introduction to Transportation Conformity is now scheduled in Chicago, IL on April 24-26, 2012 and in Atlanta, GA on June 27-29. The two and one-half day course is free to employees of public agencies. For more information and to register, go to: [NTI Conformity Training](#).

Transportation Conformity Training Courses. FHWA is sponsoring a two-day Introduction to Transportation Conformity training course in response to requests from various states. For more information or if you are interested in hosting a training session, please contact Sarah Siwek, FHWA's contractor for these courses at ssiwek@aol.com.

Conformity 101 Training Available On-Line. FHWA has made a short course titled "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 Joon.Byun@dot.gov or 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, upcoming training schedule, 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](#).

Contacts

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Past issues are available at [FHWA's website](#). If you have any suggestions for future issues, please email: Sarah Siwek at ssiwek@aol.com.