Update on the 2015 Ozone Air Quality Standard

On October 1, 2015 EPA revised the 8-hour ozone air quality standard to 70 parts per billion. Generally, the Clean Air Act (CAA) calls for initial area designations no later than 2 years after a new or revised air quality standard. Typically, EPA designates areas as “nonattainment” or “Unclassifiable/Attainment”. The CAA does allow for a 1-year extension in the event the Administrator has insufficient information to make area designations.

Back in June EPA determined that there is insufficient information to make designation decisions and extended the deadline for initial designations to October 1, 2018. In response to lawsuits EPA withdrew that determination and extension.

Given the October 1, 2017 deadline for action it is expected EPA will make some decisions and announcements in the next few days concerning designations and the 2015 ozone standard. Information is expected to be posted at: www.epa.gov/ozone-designations.