Area Designations for the 2015 Ozone Air Quality Standard

On November 16, 2017 EPA published a final rule designating most areas in the United States as “Attainment/Unclassifiable” for the 2015 ozone air quality standard of 70 parts per billion (ppb). These were areas where EPA agreed with State recommendations and there were no nearby monitors violating the standard.

On January 5 EPA published a notice of availability and public comment period for EPA’s intended designations for additional areas. For most of the country EPA intends to complete designations by April 30, 2018.

For the Houston area the EPA’s intention is to designate the current 8 county ozone nonattainment area as nonattainment for the 2015 ozone standard. The 8 Houston area counties are Brazoria, Chambers, Fort Bend, Galveston, Harris, Liberty, Montgomery and Waller.

For the Dallas/Fort Worth area EPA’s intention is to designate the current 10 county ozone nonattainment area as nonattainment for the 2015 ozone standard.

For the San Antonio area EPA has not decided on the intended designations. Bexar County has two monitors that violate the 2015 ozone standard. EPA intends to complete designations for the San Antonio area no later than August 10, 2018.

The comment period for EPA’s intended designations closes February 5. More information is available at www.epa.gov/ozone-designations.