

## **EPA Report to H-GAC Regional Air Quality Planning Advisory Committee Meeting June 24, 2021**

### **Reconsideration for the Fine Particulate Matter (PM<sub>2.5</sub>) National Ambient Air Quality Standard**

On June 10 EPA announced that it is reconsidering the December 2020 decision to retain the PM<sub>2.5</sub> standard. Available scientific evidence and technical information indicate that the current standards may not be adequate to protect public health and welfare, as required by the Clean Air Act. EPA expects to issue a proposal for comment in Summer 2022 and finalize its decision in Spring 2023. More information is available at:

<https://www.epa.gov/naaqs/particulate-matter-pm-air-quality-standards>

### **Serious Area Attainment Deadlines for the 2008 Ozone Air Quality Standard**

Ozone nonattainment areas like Houston that are classified as Serious for the 2008 ozone standard of 75 parts per billion (ppb) have an attainment deadline of July 20, 2021. EPA will use calendar year data for 2018-2020 to determine whether these areas attained by the attainment deadline. The Clean Air Act calls for EPA to publish a determination on whether these ozone nonattainment areas attained the 2008 ozone standard by the attainment deadline within 6 months of the deadline.

EPA has received a request to grant the Houston area a 1-year extension of the attainment date as the area's 4<sup>th</sup> highest daily maximum 8 hour average in the 2020 attainment year is 75 ppb.

It is expected that EPA will publish a national proposal for the Serious ozone nonattainment areas that will cover:

- Determinations of Attainment by the Attainment Date
- Extensions of the Attainment Date
- Reclassification of Areas to Severe

The national proposal is expected to be published this summer in order for EPA to meet the January 20, 2022 date for publishing the attainment determinations for areas that are classified as Serious for the 2008 ozone standard. It is also expected that the proposal will address the request for a 1-year extension of the Houston attainment date. Publication of the proposal in the Federal Register will start a 30-day comment period.