

**FACT SHEET**  
**Revisions to Lead Ambient Air Monitoring Requirements**

**ACTION**

- On December 14, 2010, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) revised the ambient monitoring requirements for measuring lead (Pb) in the air. These amendments expand the nation's lead monitoring network to better assess compliance with the revised National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for lead issued in 2008.
- EPA is changing the emission threshold that state monitoring agencies must use to determine if an air quality monitor should be placed near an industrial facility that emits lead. The new emission threshold is 0.5 tons per year (tpy), reduced from the previous threshold of 1.0 tpy. Any new monitors located near an emissions source must be operational no later than one year after this rule is published in the Federal Register.
- EPA is maintaining a 1.0 tpy lead emission threshold for airports. However, EPA is requiring a 1-year monitoring study of 15 additional airports (beyond those currently required to monitor at the existing 1.0 tpy emission threshold). The study will help EPA determine whether airports that emit less than 1.0 tpy have the potential to cause the surrounding areas to exceed the lead NAAQS of 0.15 micrograms per cubic meter ( $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ ). The monitors participating in the study must be operational no later than one year after this rule is published in the Federal Register.
- EPA is also requiring lead monitoring in large urban areas (Core Based Statistical Areas, or CBSAs, with a population of 500,000 people or more). Monitors will be located along with multi-pollutant ambient monitoring sites (known as the "NCore network"). Lead monitoring at these sites will begin January 1, 2012.
  - The NCore network will consist of approximately 80 monitoring sites, of which 63 will be in large urban areas. The requirement to add these monitors replaces an existing requirement to place lead monitors in each CBSA with a population of 500,000 or more people.
- EPA estimates that a net increase of up to 76 lead monitors will be required to satisfy the revised monitoring requirements
  - Increase of 114 source-oriented monitors
  - Increase of 63 monitors at urban NCore network sites
  - Decrease of 101 non-source-oriented monitors previously required in CBSA's with a population of 500,000 or more

## **BACKGROUND**

- The national lead monitoring network measures concentrations of lead in the outdoor air, to assess compliance with the lead National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS).
- EPA substantially strengthened the lead NAAQS in a rule issued Oct. 15, 2008, revising the level of the primary (health-based) standard from 1.5 micrograms per cubic meter ( $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ ) to  $0.15 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ , measured as total suspended particles (TSP). The agency revised the secondary (welfare-based) standard to be identical to the primary standard.
- In January 2009, EPA received a petition to reconsider the lead monitoring requirements from the Missouri Coalition for the Environment Foundation, Natural Resources Defense Council, the Coalition to End Childhood Lead Poisoning, and Physicians for Social Responsibility.
- EPA granted the petition to reconsider on July 22, 2009, and proposed revisions to the monitoring requirements on December 30, 2009, as a result of EPA's reconsideration of the lead monitoring requirements. Today's action finalizes revisions to the lead monitoring requirements based on comments received on EPA's proposed revisions.

## **FOR MORE INFORMATION**

- To download a copy of the final rules, go to EPA's Web site at: <http://www.epa.gov/air/lead>.
- Today's final rule and other background information are also available either electronically at <http://www.regulations.gov>, EPA's electronic public docket and comment system, or in hardcopy at the EPA Docket Center's Public Reading Room.
  - The Public Reading Room is located in the EPA Headquarters, Room Number 3334 in the EPA West Building, located at 1301 Constitution Avenue, NW, Washington, DC. Hours of operation are 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. eastern standard time, Monday through Friday, excluding Federal holidays.
  - Visitors are required to show photographic identification, pass through a metal detector, and sign the EPA visitor log. All visitor materials will be processed through an X-ray machine as well. Visitors will be provided a badge that must be visible at all times.
  - Materials for this final action can be accessed using Docket ID No. EPA-HQOAR-2006-0735.
- For more information about lead in the air, and the recent NAAQS revision, go to EPA's website at: <http://epa.gov/air/lead/>.

- For more information about today's rulemaking, contact Kevin Cavender at EPA's Office of Air Quality Planning and Standards at (919) 541-2364 or [cavender.kevin@epa.gov](mailto:cavender.kevin@epa.gov).