



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION III
1650 Arch Street
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19103-2029

JUN 14 2010

The Honorable Martin J. O'Malley
Governor of Maryland
State House, 100 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401-1925

Dear Governor O'Malley:

Thank you for your recommendations on air quality designations for the revised National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for lead throughout Maryland. Reducing levels of lead pollution is an important part of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) commitment to a clean, healthy environment. Lead exposure can cause a range of adverse health effects, most notably in children. Exposures to low levels of lead early in life have been linked to effects on IQ, learning, memory and behavior. This letter is to notify you of EPA's response to Maryland's designation recommendations, and to inform you of our approach in completing the designations for the revised lead NAAQS.

On October 15, 2008, EPA substantially strengthened the NAAQS for lead. The new standard, set at 0.15 micrograms per cubic meter ($\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$), is 10 times more stringent than the previous standard. In conjunction with strengthening the lead NAAQS, EPA also established new criteria for siting ambient lead monitors. The pre-existing ambient lead monitoring network was inadequate for determining whether many areas are meeting the revised lead NAAQS. Monitors meeting the new network siting requirements were to begin operation January 1, 2010.

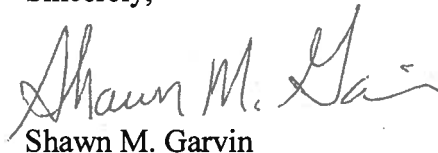
The Clean Air Act (CAA) requires EPA to complete the initial designation process within two years of promulgating a new or revised NAAQS. If the Administrator has insufficient information to make these designations, EPA has the authority to extend the designation process by up to one year. In light of the new monitoring network which will generate additional information in the upcoming year, EPA intends to complete the lead designations in two rounds. In the first round, to be completed by October 15, 2010, EPA is designating as "nonattainment" any area in violation of the 2008 lead NAAQS based on data from the pre-2010 monitoring network. For all other areas, EPA is extending the deadline for designations by up to one year so that data from the newly-deployed monitors can be considered in making appropriate designation decisions. EPA will complete the second round of lead designations no later than October 15, 2011.



We have reviewed Maryland's October 15, 2009 recommendation letter on air quality designations, which recommended a designation of "unclassifiable" for the entire state. EPA is not intending to complete the initial area designations for Maryland at this time. Instead, in the second round of lead designations, EPA intends to evaluate new information and designate all areas in Maryland by no later than October 15, 2011. If you would like to submit updated recommendations for your areas for our consideration in the second round of designations, we request that you do so by December 15, 2010. For the second round of designations, we will notify all states of our preliminary responses to their recommendations by no later than June 17, 2011.

We look forward to a continued dialogue with you and your staff as we work together to implement the 2008 lead NAAQS. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call me or have your staff contact Mrs. Linda Miller, EPA's Maryland Liaison, at 215-814-2068.

Sincerely,



Shawn M. Garvin
Regional Administrator

cc: Honorable. Shari T. Wilson, Secretary
Maryland Department of the Environment
Mr. George S. Aburn, Director
Air and Radiation Management Administration
Maryland Department of the Environment
Ms. Gina McCarthy, EPA Assistant Administrator
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Steven D. Page, Director
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