



**UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY**  
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**OFFICE OF AIR QUALITY PLANNING AND STANDARDS**

**Technical Note- Clarifications and Guidance on Shelter Temperature Guidance for**  
**Ambient Air Pollutant Methods**

03/08/2018

In order to address issues related to the recent OIG Management Alert associated with findings of inconsistencies in the implementation of guidance associated with shelter temperature requirements, EPA is providing some additional guidance on the process. In summary, we will revise our guidance in the QA Handbook to clarify that data from monitors should be considered valid that is outside the 20-30<sup>o</sup> shelter temperature guidance if the federal reference method (FRM) or federal equivalent method (FEM) monitor has been approved at a wider temperature range. This clarification and guidance is effective immediately.

**Background**

When the process of approving monitors as federal reference or equivalent methods (FRM/FEM) was started, one of the testing criteria was for monitors to properly operate at 20-30<sup>o</sup>C. Therefore, the majority (if not all) monitors were initially designated and approved with the 20-30<sup>o</sup>C temperature operating range. The QA Handbook guidance also suggested that the monitoring shelters be outfitted with HVAC systems to maintain the shelters at 20-30<sup>o</sup>C with the expectation that data that was collected outside this range was of uncertain quality and be invalidated. However, newer monitors have been designated at wider temperature ranges. The 2017 QA Handbook was revised to accommodate these monitors while also indicating that the shelter must be maintained to accommodate the monitor with the most sensitive temperature requirement. OAQPS believes that if a shelter does go beyond 20-30<sup>o</sup>C range, data should not be invalidated from all monitors but only those that are not designated to operate at the temperature excursion. EPA expected that the guidance in the QA Handbook would be used in this manner, but OIG did not observe this in all cases. Since the QA Handbook gets updated every five years and was last updated in 2017, in response to this recommendation, OAR will develop and post a table of changes on AMTIC that will apply to monitoring guidance until the next full QA Handbook revision.

**Summary**

In summary, monitoring organizations should report data as valid that exceeds the general shelter temperature requirement of 20-30<sup>o</sup>C if the approved FRM/FEM designation allows the monitor to operate at a wider temperature range and the monitor is within the range for which it has been approved.