

Fact Sheet — Final Area Designations for the National Ambient Air Quality Standards for Ozone Established in 2015 – San Antonio, Texas

ACTIONS

- On July 17, 2018, the EPA completed area designations for the 2015 ozone standards by designating eight counties in the San Antonio, Texas metropolitan area.
- The EPA has designated Bexar County, Texas as nonattainment and the remaining seven counties – Atascosa, Bandera, Comal, Guadalupe, Kendall, Medina, and Wilson – as attainment/unclassifiable.
- These designations will take effect 60 days after the notice summarizing this action is published in the *Federal Register*.
- The Clean Air Act (CAA) directs that ozone nonattainment areas be classified based on the severity of the air quality problem at the time of designation. Bexar County is classified as a “Marginal” nonattainment area. Of the five classification categories, Marginal nonattainment areas have ozone levels that are closest to the ozone standards at the time of designation.

Nonattainment Area Requirements

- The Clean Air Act addresses planning requirements for nonattainment areas.
- For Marginal nonattainment areas such as the San Antonio, Texas area, the CAA does not require states to develop attainment plans demonstrating how they will meet the ozone standards.
- The San Antonio, Texas nonattainment area will be subject to Nonattainment New Source Review requirements. New Source Review is a permitting program for industrial facilities to ensure that new and modified sources of pollution do not impede progress toward cleaner air.
- Marginal nonattainment areas, such as the San Antonio, Texas area, are required to meet the standards as quickly as possible but no later than 3 years from the effective date of designation.

BACKGROUND

- The Clean Air Act requires the EPA to designate all areas in the county after the agency sets a new National Ambient Air Quality Standard or revises an existing standard.
- On October 1, 2015, the EPA strengthened the primary and secondary air quality standards for ozone by establishing 8-hour standards at a level of 70 parts per billion. On November 6, 2017, the EPA designated 85 percent of the counties in the U.S. as attainment/unclassifiable, including Indian county located in those counties, two separate

areas of Indian country, and five territories as attainment/unclassifiable for the 2015 ozone standards. EPA also designated 3 counties as unclassifiable. On April 30, 2018, the EPA designated the remaining areas in the U.S. except for the eight counties in the San Antonio metropolitan area.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- For more information on the designation process for the 2015 ozone standards go to EPA's Web site at: <https://www.epa.gov/ozone-designations>.