EPA Proposal to Revise the National Ambient Air Quality Standard for Sulfur Dioxide (SO_2)

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Proposal:

- Existing SO2 standards are:
  1. Annual average - 30 ppb
  2. 24-Hour average – 140 ppb

- Proposed:
  - Discontinue both annual & 24-hour average standards.
  - Introduce a new 1-hour SO2 standard between 50-100 ppb. Taking comments up to 150 ppb.

Proposal:

- Proposed Forms of Standard –
  - 3-year average of the 4th highest daily maximum 1-hour average concentrations or,
  - 3-year average of the 99th percentile of the annual distribution of daily maximum 1-hour average concentrations.
- Changes to SO2 monitoring network & reporting requirements.
- Revise AQI based on the new 1-hour standard.

Comment Period

- Proposed on November 16, 2009
- Comment Period: 60 days after publication in Federal Register.
- Public Hearing – January 5, 2010 (Atlanta, GA).
- Submit comments by four methods –
  - www.regulations.gov : Online submission
  - E-Mail: a-and-r-Docket@epa.gov, Attn. Docket ID No. EPA-HQ-OAR-2007-0352.
  - Fax: 202-566-1741, Attn. Docket ID. No. EPA-HQ-OAR-2007-0352.
  - Mail: Air and Radiation Docket and Information Center, Environmental Protection Agency, Mail Code: 6102T, 1200 Pennsylvania Ave., NW, Washington, DC, 20460, Attn. Docket ID No. EPA-HQ-OAR-2007-0352.
- http://www.epa.gov/air/sulfurdioxide

Why a 1-hour standard ….1

- New 1-hour standard would better protect public by reducing people's exposure to high short-term (5 minutes to 24 hours) SO2 concentrations.
- New 1-hour standard would continue to prevent SO2 concentrations from exceeding the current 24-hour and annual standards.
- Little health evidence to suggest an association between long-term exposure to SO2 and public health effects.

Why a 1-hour standard ….2

- Hourly revised standards would yield health benefits valued between $16-$100 billion.
- Benefits include reduced hospital admissions, emergency room visits, work days lost, cases of aggravated asthma and chronic bronchitis, among others.

Monitoring Network

- Current SO2 network not primarily configured to monitor locations of expected maximum short-term concentrations.
- Proposal for two categories of monitors –
  - 1. Monitors in certain Core Based Statistical Areas (CBSAs) based on a combination of population and SO2.
  - 2. Additional monitors based on a state's contribution to national SO2 emissions. States determine the specific locations of these monitors.

Monitoring Network

- Both categories required to be source-oriented and situated for maximum ground-level concentrations.
- EPA Regional Administrators –
  - Additional monitoring in certain circumstances (e.g. areas impacted by major industrial point sources or a combination of sources not required to monitor under the other monitoring provisions)
- All new SO2 monitors be operational by Jan. 1, 2013.

Reporting Requirements

- State would report both the 1-hour and 5-minute averaged SO2 data available in each hour of the day.
- This means that total 13 SO2 concentration values would be reported for each hour.

Proposed Implementation Schedule

Milestone	Date
Signature – Final Rule	June 2, 2010
State Designation Recommendation	June 2011
EPA Designations	June 2012
SIPs Due	Winter 2014
Attainment Date	Summer 2017