

OTC Notice on Public Comment Period and Public Hearing

ACTION: Ozone Transport Commission notice of public comment period and public hearing.

SUMMARY: The Ozone Transport Commission (OTC) is announcing a public hearing and soliciting public comment regarding whether the OTC should review recent operations and develop additional control measures within part of the Ozone Transport Region (OTR), specifically the potential need for daily NO_x limits at coal-fired Electricity Generating Units (EGUs) in Pennsylvania, as necessary to bring any area in the OTR into attainment by the dates mandated by the Clean Air Act (CAA). Specifically, the OTC is soliciting public comment on: 1) whether the OTC should develop additional control measures for Pennsylvania, and if so, 2) how those specific control measures should be structured.

DATES:

Comments: Comments must be received no later than 5:00 p.m. on August 16, 2019. Please submit your comments by email to ozone@otcair.org or by mail to the Ozone Transport Commission, 800 Maine Avenue SW, Suite 200, Washington, DC 20024.

The OTC may publish any comment received to a public docket. Do not submit electronically any information you consider to be Confidential Business Information (CBI) or other information whose disclosure is restricted by statute. Multimedia submissions (audio, video, etc.) must be accompanied by a written comment. The written comment will be considered the official comment and should include discussion of all points you wish to make.

Written comments that are submitted during the comment period will be considered with the same weight as any oral testimony presented at the public hearing. Written comments must be postmarked by the last day of the comment period.

Public hearing: The OTC will hold a public hearing on August 16, 2019. The public hearing will convene at 9:00 a.m. and end at 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time (ET) or 1 hour after the last registered speaker has spoken. The hearing will be held at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region III, Public Information Center, 1650 Arch Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19103. Hearing attendees should enter the building through the Arch Street entrance doors. Interested persons are invited to attend and express their views.

If you would like to present oral testimony at the hearing, please notify the OTC via email at ozone@otcair.org or telephone at (202) 318-0190, no later than 5:00 p.m. ET on August 14, 2019. OTC will arrange a general time slot for you to speak. The OTC will make every effort to follow the schedule as closely as possible on the day of the hearing. Oral testimony will be limited to 5 minutes for each commenter. The OTC encourages commenters to provide the OTC with a copy of their oral testimony electronically (via email) or in hard copy form. Commenters should notify OTC if they need specific translation services for non-English speaking commenters or an interpreter for deaf and hearing impaired persons. The request for any such service should be made at least ten (10) days prior to the hearing.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: The Ozone Transport Commission, 800 Maine Avenue SW, Suite 200, Washington, DC 20024; phone: (202) 318-0190; email: ozone@otcair.org; website: <http://www.otcair.org>.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Established under the provisions of Sections 176A and 184 of the CAA, the OTC is comprised of the States of Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont and the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area that includes the District of Columbia and a portion of Virginia.

Under Section 184(c) of the CAA, any State within the OTR may petition the OTC to develop, after notice and opportunity for public comment, recommendations for additional control measures to be applied within all or a part of the OTR if the OTC determines such measures are necessary to bring any area in the OTR into attainment by the dates provided by the CAA.

About 30 million people living in the Northeast breathe air that fails to meet the current 2015 ozone national ambient air quality standard (NAAQS) of 70 parts per billion (ppb). As a result, large areas of the region are designated as nonattainment for ozone, including all or portions of: Connecticut, Delaware, the District of Columbia, Maryland, New Jersey, New York and Pennsylvania. In its assessment of ozone transport, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has identified Pennsylvania as a contributor to high ozone in each of the states failing to meet the 2015 ozone NAAQS. In addition, EPA has determined that Pennsylvania contributes to portions of Connecticut, New Jersey and New York that still fail to meet the 2008 NAAQS of 75 ppb.

On May 30, 2019, Maryland petitioned the OTC under CAA Section 184(c). The Maryland petition may be viewed at <https://mde.maryland.gov/programs/Air/Pages/index.aspx>. The petition asks the OTC to consider developing additional control measures within part of the OTR, specifically the potential need for daily limits at coal-fired EGUs in Pennsylvania, as necessary to bring areas in the OTR into attainment by the dates mandated by the CAA.

On June 26, 2019, the OTC voted to proceed with the initial steps associated with CAA Section 184(c) petition process, including analyzing recent EGU operations in Pennsylvania. The OTC is now soliciting public comment on: 1) whether the OTC should develop additional control measures for Pennsylvania, and if so, 2) how those specific control measures should be structured.