

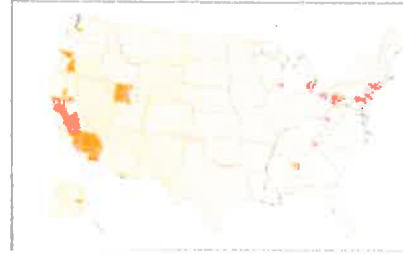


31 Areas Do Not Meet PM 2.5 Standards

Oct 13, 2009

EPA's nonattainment map.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is [designating](#) 31 areas in 18 states as not meeting the agency's daily standards for fine particle air pollution (PM 2.5), or particulate matter. These areas, made up of 120 full or partial counties, were designated as "nonattainment" because their air quality monitoring data showed that they did not meet the agency's health-based standards.



Counties in California, New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania seem to be [particularly affected](#). The good news is that 91 U.S. counties that were identified as nonattainment in December 2008 are now meeting the standards.

According to Rick Albright, head of EPA's air quality program in Seattle, these communities will need to develop their plans for reducing pollution by 2012 and demonstrate that they are meeting federal standards and are in "attainment" by fall of 2014.

The five nonattainment areas in the Northwest (Idaho, Oregon, Washington) and Alaska all have more air pollution problems in the winter from home heating sources including older wood stoves and oil furnaces. In addition, during stagnant weather conditions with cold temperatures and limited air movement, pollution may "pool" in an area rather than dissipate. In some areas, vehicles and industrial sources also contribute to high wintertime particulate matter levels.

EPA also announced that Juneau, Alaska and Pinehurst, Idaho, which were formerly designated as nonattainment, are now considered in attainment of the standards, based on the latest data.

In Region 5, EPA said Illinois, Indiana and Minnesota counties meet the standard. The agency notified the governors of Michigan, Ohio and Wisconsin that some counties in their states fail to meet the standard:

- Livingston, Macomb, Monroe, Oakland, St. Clair, Washtenaw and Wayne counties in Michigan;

EPA's Nonattainment Map

