

Board Proposes “Identical-in-Substance” Amendments to Ambient Air Quality Standards

On May 21, 2020, for public comment and hearing, the Board proposed rule amendments that are “identical in substance” to federal actions taken during 2019 and the second half of 2018. The federal actions were taken by the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) and concerned the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS). The USEPA actions considered by the Board included the October 16, 2018 corrections to area designations for the 2015 NAAQS for ozone (O₃); the December 27, 2018 and May 28, 2019 area redesignations for the 1997 primary NAAQS for fine particulate matter (PM_{2.5}); the March 29, 2019, May 28, 2019, and September 26, 2019 designation of new federal reference methods (FRMs) and federal equivalent methods (FEMs) for sulfur dioxide (SO₂), O₃, and carbon monoxide; the August 23, 2019 area reclassification for O₃; the September 13, 2019 reconsideration of an area designation for the 2016 SO₂ NAAQS; and the December 15, 2019 release of an update to USEPA’s *List of Designated Reference and Equivalent Methods*.

The Board will continue accepting public comments on the proposed rule amendments for 45 days after their publication in the *Illinois Register*. The Board will also hold a public hearing on July 16, 2020. The hearing will take place by videoconference between the Board’s Springfield and Chicago hearing rooms; anyone may participate in person at either location. In addition, due to COVID-19 and related Executive Orders in effect at the time of hearing notice, the Board added ways to participate in the hearing—specifically, anyone may participate remotely by WebEx computer (audio/video) or WebEx telephone (audio only).

The Board’s rulemaking is captioned National Ambient Air Quality Standards, USEPA Amendments (July 1, 2018 through December 31, 2018), National Ambient Air Quality Standards, USEPA Amendments (January 1, 2019 through June 30, 2019), and National Ambient Air Quality Standards, USEPA Amendments (July 1, 2019 through December 31, 2019), dockets R19-14, R20-3, and R20-11 (consol.) (May 21, 2020). Here are links to (1) the Board’s [opinion and order](#), which includes the proposed rule amendments, as well as details on how to participate in the hearing, and (2) the Board’s [addendum](#), which provides tables of information concerning the rulemaking. For more information, please contact Hearing Officer Michael McCambridge at 312-814-6924 or michael.mccambridge@illinois.gov.