

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

On September 17, 2020, the Board proposed rule amendments to Illinois’ ambient air quality standards. The amendments will keep these standards “identical in substance” to the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS).

During the first half of 2020, the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) designated a new federal reference method for monitoring sulfur dioxide and a new federal equivalent method for monitoring nitrogen dioxide in ambient air. The Board proposed incorporating the newly designated methods into the Illinois rules. USEPA also redesignated the Lemont and Pekin areas from “nonattainment” to “attainment” for the 2010 sulfur dioxide NAAQS, but this redesignation does not change any NAAQS applicability in Illinois and requires no Board action.

The Board also proposed a limited number of corrective amendments that are not based on USEPA action taken during the first half of 2020. Significant among the corrections is the proposed deletion of incorporations by reference of two appendices to 40 C.F.R. 50. The appendices support a NAAQS that has been both revoked by USEPA as to Illinois and removed by the Board.

The Board will accept public comments on the proposed amendments for at least 45 days after their publication in the *Illinois Register*. The Board will also hold a public hearing on November 19, 2020. The Board expects to adopt final rules as early as December 4, 2020, but no later than the statutory due date of February 3, 2021.

The Board’s rulemaking is captioned National Ambient Air Quality Standards, USEPA Amendments (January 1, 2020 through June 30, 2020), docket R21-1. Here are links to (1) the Board’s [opinion and order](#), which includes the text of the proposed amendments, 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.