



IOWA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Air Quality News

Environmental Services

EPA Approves Iowa's Attainment Plan for Muscatine County

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has approved Iowa's sulfur dioxide (SO₂) attainment plan for Muscatine County. In collaboration with the DNR, facilities in the Muscatine area started reducing their SO₂ emissions in 2015 to meet the federal health standard for SO₂. EPA's approval of the plan was published in the Federal Register on November 17, 2020 and will be effective on December 17, 2020. In this action EPA also determined that Iowa's current regulations related to excess emissions during startup, shutdown, and malfunction (SSM) events do not need revision.

Background

On August 5, 2013, EPA issued a final rule designating a portion of Muscatine County, Iowa, as a nonattainment area for the 1-hour SO₂ national ambient air quality standard (NAAQS). The nonattainment designation occurred after EPA revised the SO₂ NAAQS in 2010 by adding new health protections for short-term exposures to SO₂.

The DNR and facilities in the Muscatine nonattainment area developed a plan to reduce SO₂ emissions to attain the new standard as quickly as possible. After public review and comment and Environmental Protection Commission approval, the DNR submitted the plan to EPA on May 26, 2016. The implementation of the plan's control measures has reduced SO₂ emissions in the area by over 10,000 tons per year and, starting with the 2015-2017 time frame, ambient concentrations measured in Muscatine have attained the 1-hour SO₂ NAAQS. Now that EPA has finalized the approval of the plan, the DNR is working with EPA to redesignate the area to attainment.

EPA's final rule approving the Muscatine attainment plan also included a determination that Iowa's regulations regarding excess emissions during SSM events are consistent with recent federal policy and EPA has withdrawn Iowa from the June 12, 2015, SSM "SIP Call."

Copies of the DNR's attainment plan and EPA's final approval are on our website: <https://www.iowadnr.gov/Environmental-Protection/Air-Quality/Implementation-Plans>, under **Implementation Plans for Nonattainment and Maintenance Areas**, within the "Muscatine 1-hour SO₂ Nonattainment Area" subheading. Please contact Matthew Johnson at matthew.johnson@dnr.iowa.gov or Jim McGraw at jim.mcgraw@dnr.iowa.gov if you have questions.

A note on Iowa DNR and COVID-19

The Iowa Department of Natural Resources is working with state and local officials to reduce the spread of COVID-19 and has transitioned employees to work remotely. DNR offices are closed to the public during this time and only available by appointment.

In another effort to further reduce the spread of COVID-19, the DNR is encouraging the use of the online services for submitting applications, payments and other daily tasks and interaction with DNR staff.

- [Full list of DNR's online services](#)
- [Up-to-date information on DNR services, facilities and events impacted by COVID-19](#)
- [Technical information for regulated businesses in regards to COVID-19](#)

We thank you for your patience and flexibility during this time. If you need to contact DNR staff you can reach them by email or phone or by calling 515-725-8200

DNR's Air Quality News listserve is targeted to the regulated public and consultants to deliver timely regulatory news, program updates, and technical guidance to your email. If you have difficulty, please contact DNR's Wendy Walker at 515-725-9570.