



# Air Quality FACT SHEET

## Federal Air Quality Standards

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Under the Clean Air Act, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is responsible for setting standards, also known as national ambient air quality standards (NAAQS), for pollutants considered harmful to people and the environment. EPA also works with states and local governments to make sure these standards are met.

The regulated air pollutants most affected by transportation are:

- **Ozone** – Ground-level ozone can trigger a variety of health problems, particularly for children, the elderly, and people of all ages who have lung diseases such as asthma. The most recent ozone standard was set in 2015. This standard sets a maximum level of 0.07 parts per million (ppm) based on the most recent three-year average.<sup>1</sup>
- **Particulate Matter (PM)** - Particulate matter contains microscopic solids or liquid droplets that are so small that they can be inhaled and cause serious health problems. Particles also are a contributor to haze. EPA has set standards for both fine and coarse particles, based on 24-hour and annual average concentrations.

### Florida's Attainment of the Standards

Florida is currently in attainment of all air quality standards set by the EPA.

States and tribes submit recommendations to the EPA as to whether or not an area is attaining the NAAQS for a specific pollutant, based on air quality monitoring data. After working with the states and tribes and considering the information from air quality monitors, and/or models, EPA will "designate" an area as attainment or nonattainment for the standard.

EPA requires that each state containing nonattainment areas to develop a written plan for cleaning the air in those areas. The plans developed are called state implementation plans, or SIPs.

The Clean Air Act requires that EPA periodically review the standards that have been set. Revisions to the standards are made through a process that includes public input. In 2020, EPA reviewed the ozone and PM standards and has proposed to retain the current standards without revision.<sup>2</sup>

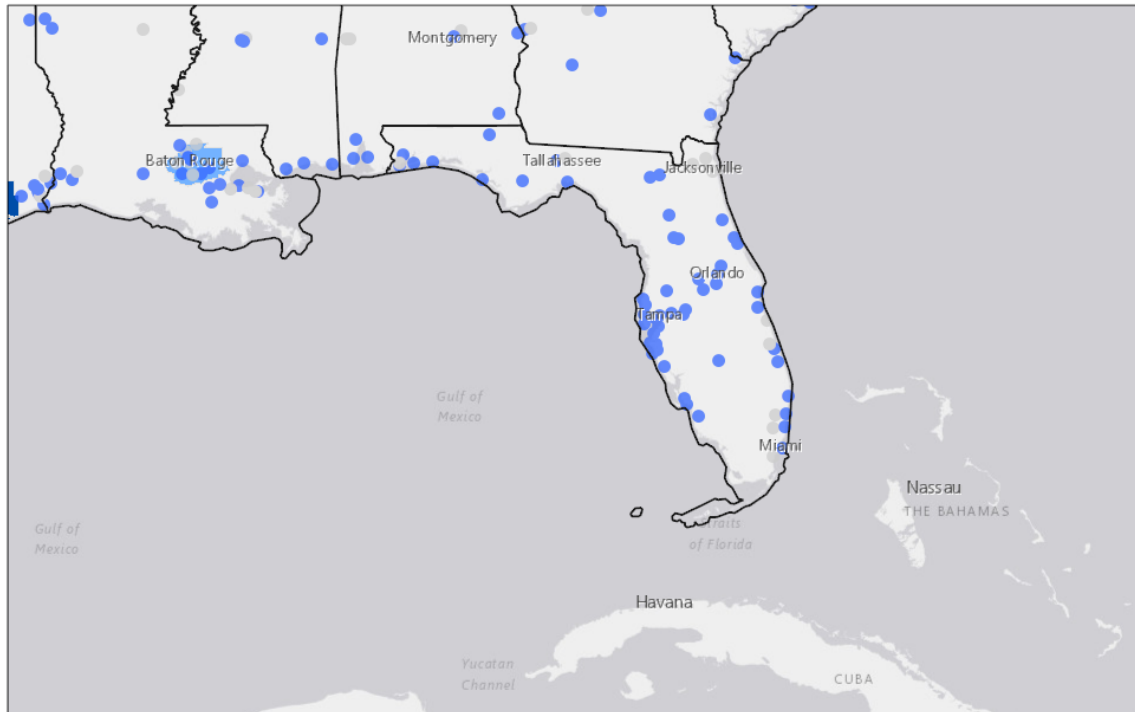
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<sup>1</sup> Specifically, the standard is for the fourth-highest daily maximum 8-hour concentration at a monitor, averaged across three consecutive years.

<sup>2</sup> Review of the National Ambient Air Quality Standards for Particulate Matter. Federal Register, 85 FR 24094, April 30, 2020; Review of the Ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standards, Pre-publication Federal Register Notice, July 13, 2020.

In addition to periodic review triggered by revisions to standards, air quality is monitored continuously using a network of monitors in every state. If a certain number of exceedances of a standard are reached in a given period of time, an area may be designated nonattainment.

### EPA Ozone Designations Mapping Tool



7/21/2020, 6:17:45 PM

State Boundaries

Ozone 2017 Site Design Values (ppm)

No valid value

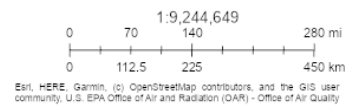
0 - 0.070

0.070 and above

Ozone 2008 NAAQS NAA State Level

Maintenance

Nonattainment



U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

## Links to Information

U.S. EPA information on criteria air pollutants - <https://www.epa.gov/criteria-air-pollutants>

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