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Region 6
External Affairs (6XA)
1445 Ross Avenue
Dallas, Texas 75202-2733
Public Information: (800) 887-6063

For more information contact Dave Bary or Joe Hubbard at 214-665-2200 or r6press@epa.gov
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EPA proposing to redesignate Baton Rouge area to attainment for ozone

Proposal will affect Ascension, East Baton Rouge, Iberville, Livingston and West Baton Rouge Parishes

(Dallas, Texas – Aug. 17, 2011) The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is proposing to approve the state of Louisiana's request to reclassify the Baton Rouge area to attainment of the 1997 8-hour ozone standard. By decreasing ground-level ozone, Baton Rouge and the state of Louisiana are improving air quality and human health for more than 800,000 residents.

"Today we are acknowledging an important accomplishment for Baton Rouge," said EPA Regional Administrator Al Armendariz. "We look forward to working with state and city officials, business and local organizations as we continue efforts to improve air quality and protect public health."

Preliminary air quality data for 2011 continues to show that the area meets the 1997 8-hour standard as well as the 1-hour standard for ozone. Louisiana has demonstrated that the five parish area will be able to maintain compliance with the ozone standard for the next ten years. Current air pollution controls enable the area to maintain clean air quality. EPA will continue to work with State and local officials to ensure the area remains in compliance.

In a separate action, EPA has proposed to reconsider the 8-hour standard for ozone and a final decision on the new standard is expected soon. However, the reconsideration will not affect today's action.

Ground-level ozone is formed when a mixture of pollutants react on warm, sunny days. The pollutants are released from cars, factories and a wide variety of other sources. Ozone can cause respiratory problems, including coughing, wheezing, shortness of breath and chest pain.

The proposal will be published in the Federal Register in about 10 days. An advance copy is available on the EPA website. After publication, EPA will take public comment on the proposal for 30 days.

To submit public comments, visit docket number EPA-R06-OAR-2010-0776 at www.regulations.gov.

Additional information on the [eight-hour ozone standard](#) is available at <http://www.epa.gov/ozonedesignations/index.htm>.

More about activities in EPA Region 6: <http://www.epa.gov/aboutepa/region6.html>

EPA audio file is available at <http://www.epa.gov/region6/6xa/podcast/aug2011.html>

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