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EPA proposes to announce Baton Rouge attainment for 8-hour ozone standard

BATON ROUGE – The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency announced today that they are proposing to determine that the Baton Rouge area has attained the 1997 8-hour standard for the pollutant ozone. EPA has previously made such a determination that the area is meeting the prior and now revoked standard that was based on 1-hour ozone readings.

The Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality has presented EPA with a package of complete, quality assured and certified ambient air quality data showing that the Baton Rouge area has been monitoring attainment of the standard based upon data collected between 2006 and 2009. EPA has agreed with the data and has published a Notice of Intent to make this determination official in the Federal Register. Favorable EPA action will suspend certain planning activities that are required under the Clean Air Act. This would allow DEQ to focus on implementation efforts directed towards a new, tougher ozone standard scheduled to be announced in August.

“Residents and business leaders in the Baton Rouge area need to be recognized for their proactive roles in implementing practices that resulted in cleaner air for the community,” said Peggy Hatch, DEQ Secretary. “While there will be new measures required as a result of the impending standard change, we need to observe the hard work that has gone into these tremendous air quality improvements.”

EPA will be accepting public comments on their proposal through July 26, 2010.

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