Batumi Action for Cleaner Air (BACA)
Actions by United States

Country: **United States**

Title*:*
Tier 3 Vehicle Regulations
(*BACA Actions 8, 11)*

Description: In March, 2014, The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced a new suite of vehicle regulations known as "Tier 3." The Tier 3 program is part of a comprehensive approach to reducing the impacts of motor vehicles on air quality and public health. The program considers the vehicle and its fuel as an integrated system, setting new vehicle emissions standards and lowering the sulfur content of gasoline beginning in 2017. More information is available online at http://www3.epa.gov/otaq/tier3.htm.

Expected outcome*:* The new vehicle standards will reduce both tailpipe and evaporative emissions from passenger cars, light-duty trucks, medium-duty passenger vehicles, and some heavy-duty vehicles. The Tier 3 gasoline sulfur standard will make emission control systems more effective for both existing and new vehicles, and will enable more stringent vehicle emissions standards.

Partners*:* State environmental agencies, vehicle industry

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Batumi Action for Cleaner Air (BACA)
Actions by United States

Country: **United States**

Title*:*
New Source Performance Standards for Residential Wood Heaters
(*BACA Actions 8, 9)*

Description*:* On February 3, 2015, EPA promulgated new source performance standards for residential wood heaters to make new heaters significantly cleaner and improve air quality in communities where people burn wood for heat. The updates, which are based on improved wood heater technology, strengthen the emissions standards for new woodstoves, while establishing air standards for several types of previously unregulated new wood heaters, including outdoor and indoor wood-fired boilers (also known as hydronic heaters), and indoor wood-burning forced air furnaces. For further information please visit http://www2.epa.gov/residential-wood-heaters/final-new-source-performance-standards-residential-wood-heaters.

Expected outcome*:* Fine particle and volatile organic compound (VOC) emissions from heaters covered by the rule are estimated to drop by nearly 70 percent (8,300 tons a year and 9,300 tons a year, respectively) compared to estimated emissions without the final rule. Carbon monoxide emissions from wood heaters covered by the rule will be an estimated 46,100 tons lower – a reduction of 62 percent.

Partners**:** State, local and tribal environmental agencies of the United States

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Batumi Action for Cleaner Air (BACA)
Actions by United States

Country: **United States**

Title*:*
U.S. National Ambient Air Quality Standard for ground-level ozone
(*BACA Action 8)*

Description*:* On October 1, 2015, EPA strengthened the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for ground-level ozone to 70 parts per billion (ppb), based on extensive scientific evidence about ozone's effects on public health and welfare. The updated standards will improve public health protection, particularly for at-risk groups including children, older adults, people of all ages who have lung diseases such as asthma, and people who are active outdoors, especially outdoor workers. They also will improve the health of trees, plants and ecosystems.

When EPA establishes a new NAAQS or revises an existing NAAQS, it sets in motion a series of actions aimed at ensuring that air quality throughout the country meets those standards. EPA must designate areas as meeting or not meeting the standard (attainment/nonattainment). States are required to develop a general plan to attain and maintain the NAAQS in areas under their jurisdiction, and a specific plan to attain the standards for each area designated nonattainment for a NAAQS. These plans, known as State Implementation Plans or SIPs, are developed by state and local air quality management agencies and submitted to EPA for approval. Tribal governments may also choose to develop implementation plans for nonattainment areas under their jurisdiction, or have the EPA act on their behalf. When these plans are approved by EPA, they become enforceable by EPA. If a state fails to submit an approvable plan, EPA can develop an enforceable federal implementation plan (FIP) in its place. EPA projections show the vast majority of U.S. counties will meet the standards by 2025 with federal and state rules and programs now in place or underway. Learn more about the ozone NAAQS at https://www.epa.gov/ozone-pollution.

Expected outcome: EPA estimates that meeting the 70 ppb standards will yield health benefits valued at $2.9 to $5.9 billion annually in 2025. These annual benefits include the value of avoiding a range of harmful health effects, including:

- 320 to 660 premature deaths
- 230,000 asthma attacks in children
- 160,000 days when kids miss school
- 28,000 missed work days
- 630 asthma-related emergency room visits
- 340 cases of acute bronchitis in children

These benefits outweigh the estimated annual costs of $1.4 billion.
Partners: State, local and tribal environmental agencies of the United States

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Batumi Action for Cleaner Air (BACA)
Actions by United States

Country: **United States**

Title*:*
Reducing methane emissions from the oil and gas sector
(*BACA Actions 8)*

Description: On May 12, 2016, EPA issued final New Source Performance Standards to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases and VOCs from the oil and natural gas industry. The final rule builds on EPA's 2012 standards addressing emissions for this industry, setting an emissions limit for methane, and adding requirements hydraulically fractured oil wells, along with equipment used throughout the industry that was not covered in the 2012 rules.

The final rule requires owners/operators of hydraulically fractured and refractured oil wells to capture VOC and methane emissions; fractured/refractured natural gas wells were subject to this requirement in the 2012 rules. The rule also adds requirements for pneumatic pumps at well sites and gas processing plants, compressors at gathering and boosting, and transmission compressor stations, and pneumatic controllers at transmission compressor stations. The 2016 rule also requires owners/operators to monitor for and repair leaks, which can be a significant source of both methane and VOC pollution. Also on May 12, 2016, EPA issued two final rules that clarify permitting requirements in states and Indian country. For further information please visit http://www3.epa.gov/airquality/oilandgas/.

Expected outcome*:* The final standards for new, modified and reconstructed sources are expected to reduce 510,000 short tons of methane in 2025, the equivalent of reducing 11 million metric tons of carbon dioxide.

Partners: State, local and tribal environmental agencies of the United States

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Batumi Action for Cleaner Air (BACA)
Actions by United States

Country: **United States**

Title*:*
Integrating analysis and strategies to reduce climate pollutants and air pollution
(*BACA Actions 15, 24)*

Description*:* The United Sates will continue current efforts to develop analytical tools that integrate climate pollutants and traditional air pollutants that will improve the ability to identify optimal strategies to reduce climate pollutants and air pollution simultaneously.

Expected outcome*:* Ongoing research is improving the understanding of the bidirectional linkages between air quality and climate, which will allow air quality managers to understand both how climate change will impact future air quality, and how air quality management programs fit into overall strategies to mitigate the causes of climate change. Many air quality management actions directly reduce some short-lived climate forcers, such as black carbon, and can have the co-benefit of reducing emissions of long-lived greenhouse gases. Likewise, recent actions to reduce greenhouse gases from transportation and power plants when implemented will result in reductions in both climate pollutants and traditional air pollutants.

Partners*:* Climate and Clean Air Coalition, academic and research interests

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Batumi Action for Cleaner Air (BACA)
Actions by United States

Country: **United States**

Title*:*
Supporting Air Quality Management Capacity Building Through UNEP
(*BACA Actions 28, 30)*

Description*:* The United States championed a 2014 resolution of the UN Environment Assembly of the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) to strengthen and expand the role of UNEP in promoting air quality through capacity building and public awareness, and to encourage national action to address air pollution. We will work with UNEP to plan capacity building activities as called for under the 2014 resolution, and as a first step have encouraged UNEP to hold regional workshops to provide policy development assistance to governments in their efforts to improve air quality.

We are also working with UNEP to prioritize action on national air pollution laws during the remaining period of the fourth Programme for the Development and Periodic Review of Environmental Law, or Montevideo Programme IV.

Expected outcome*:* Regional workshops will provide governments with tools to gather data on air quality and address pollution, and may facilitate further cooperation with key governments to mitigate air pollution. Attention to air pollution laws under Montevideo Programme IV would complement capacity building efforts with strong air quality regulatory frameworks, consistent with UNEA Resolution 1/7.

Partners*:* UNEP and countries

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