



## Fact Sheet for Proposed Changes to Chapter 4: Emergency Episode Avoidance Plan

**Concerns:** Because recent studies indicate that  $PM_{2.5}$  in ambient air has health effects at lower concentrations than previously thought, the EPA has lowered the standard acceptable 24-hour level of  $PM_{2.5}$  from 65 micrograms per cubic meter ( $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ ) to 35  $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ . The Emergency Episode Avoidance Plan sets the levels at which Alerts and Warnings intend to be called.

Alerts and Warnings have two parts: 1) they tell the public how they can protect themselves 2) they implement strategies to immediately reduce levels of  $PM_{2.5}$ , fine particulate matter, being emitted.

### Proposed Solutions and Regulatory Changes:

#### 1. Set Stage I Alert and Stage II Warning Levels

- A Stage I Alerts may (optional) be called if needed when  $PM_{2.5}$  8-hour average goes above 21  $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$  (60% of the standard.) This allows proactive measures if dispersion is turning for the worse.
- A Stage I Alert shall be called when  $PM_{2.5}$  8-hour averages go above 28  $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$  (80% of the standard.)
- A Stage II Warning shall be called when the 8-hour average of  $PM_{2.5}$  meets or exceeds 35  $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$  and the weather and current pollution conditions indicate that this is needed.

#### 2. Increase area for potential Alerts and Warnings

- Stage I Alerts can be called for the Air Stagnation Zone.
- Stage II Warnings can be called for Impact Zone M.
- This expansion is needed to address  $PM_{2.5}$  which is a regional pollutant.  $PM_{2.5}$  is being generated throughout Impact Zone M and it impacts the population within this area.

#### 3. Create Wildfire Plan Authority

- Give provisions for separate Wildfire Smoke Emergency Episode Avoidance Plan which can differ from rules put forth in the Chapter 4 Wintertime Alerts.
- The character of  $PM_{2.5}$  pollution from Wildfires is different from wintertime alerts and does not require the same strategies to reduce  $PM_{2.5}$ , but it does require health advisories for the public.