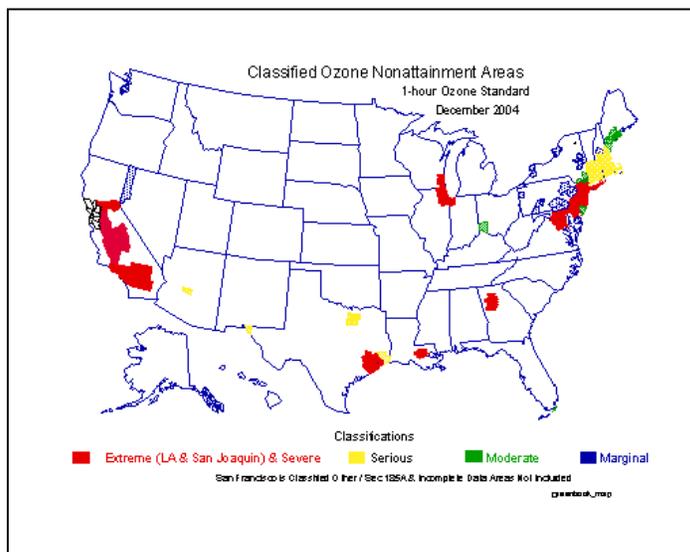


Minnesota Pollution Agency (2004)

What Is A SIP?

The federal Clean Air Act ([CAA](#)) places most of the responsibility on the states to prevent air pollution and control air pollution at its source. In order for a state to implement an air quality program, the state must adopt a plan and obtain approval of the plan from the Environmental Protection Agency ([EPA](#)). The federal review and approval process provides some consistency between programs in different states, and ensures that a state program complies with the requirements of the CAA and EPA rules. The vehicle for demonstrating compliance with the CAA and EPA rules is the State Implementation Plan, or “SIP”. A SIP adopted by the state and approved by the EPA is legally binding under both state and federal law and may be enforced at either level.

The contents of a SIP can be considered in two broad categories, (1) site or area-specific plans and documents; and (2) state rules and programs. Both are federally enforceable once accepted by EPA as part of the SIP. Before the 1990 amendments to the CAA, the entire national strategy to improve air quality consisted of the effort to attain National Ambient Air Quality Standards ([NAAQS](#)). There are primary and secondary NAAQS established for the following pollutants: carbon monoxide ([CO](#)), sulfur dioxide ([SO₂](#)), particulate matter less than 10 microns (one millionth of a meter) and less than 2.5 microns in diameter ([PM₁₀](#) and [PM_{2.5}](#)), [ozone](#), nitrogen oxides ([NO_x](#)) and [lead](#). Generally, primary standards define the air quality required to prevent adverse impact on human health, and secondary standards define the air quality required to prevent adverse impact on other elements of the environment such as vegetation.



Source: EPA's Green Book (<http://www.epa.gov/oar/oaqps/greenbk/onmapc.html>)

SIPs focus on attainment and maintenance of the NAAQS. SIPs include state air quality rules, control strategies to attain and maintain the NAAQS, compliance schedules to attain the NAAQS, the new source review program, a program to prevent state emergency episodes, and visibility protection. There are other state programs that require a plan and approval by the EPA, however, they are not termed “SIPs”. For example, the CAA amendments of 1990 required state submittal of an operating permit program, and gave states the option of submitting an air toxics program. The SIP only regulates the criteria pollutants listed above.

The primary function of the SIP is to protect ambient air standards (i.e. the NAAQS) for the principal or “criteria” air pollutants. Any site-specific plan or rule that the state or EPA believes is necessary to attain and maintain the NAAQS should be included in the SIP. A state may request, on its own, to include a plan or rule in the SIP or EPA may require a state to include certain rules and plans in its SIP. If a state fails to include an EPA mandated item in its SIP, the state may be subject to a Federal Implementation Plan (FIP).

Source: <http://www.pca.state.mn.us/publications/reports/sip-2004.pdf>