

DEQ submits plan to reduce sulfur dioxide in Wayne County to EPA

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The DEQ today submitted its plan to reduce sulfur dioxide emissions in southern Wayne County to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for final approval.

The strategy, called a State Implementation Plan, or SIP, ensures the air in Detroit and surrounding communities meets a health-based National Ambient Air Quality Standard, or NAAQS, for sulfur dioxide. It requires four industrial sources in the area to make substantial reductions in sulfur dioxide emissions during the next 2½ years.

The industrial sources are achieving these reductions in a variety of ways:

- The DTE River Rouge Power Plant is required to permanently shut down one of its two coalfired boilers by the end of the year.
- The DTE Trenton Channel Power Plant permanently shut down four of its five coalfired boilers in April 2016.
- The Carmeuse Lime kilns in River Rouge will vent sulfur dioxide emissions to a new 120-foot smokestack by October 2018 to better disperse the emissions and limit their impact.
- U.S. Steel is required to make sulfur dioxide emission reductions via a new state rule, which is in draft form as a placeholder in the SIP. The rule will be finalized within the next few weeks, and the emission reductions are required to be in effect by the end of this year.

The SIP contains legally enforceable air permits for the changes at both DTE plants and at Carmeuse Lime.

The DEQ compiled the SIP after the EPA's standard for sulfur dioxide dropped in 2010 and air monitors near Southwestern High School in Detroit showed levels of sulfur dioxide that violated the new standard.

However, air quality in Detroit continues to improve, and the air monitor near Southwestern High School has shown air quality that meets the one-hour sulfur dioxide standard for the past two years. Despite these improvements, the SIP is required to ensure continued progress in air quality, including in areas where the DEQ does not have a monitor.

The SIP is available for review at www.michigan.gov/deq/0,4561,7-135-3310_70940-193455--,00.html.

The DEQ is dedicated to respect for Michigan's citizens, stewardship of the environment, and support for a sustainable economy.