FACT SHEET
Final Rule for Imperial Valley, California
Failure to Attain the Standard for
Particulate Matter of 10 microns or less (PM-10)

Today's Action:

Today, EPA has signed a final rule to bring cleaner air to Imperial Valley:

- Final Rule Action: We are taking final action to find that the Imperial Valley failed to attain the PM-10 National Ambient Air Quality Standard (NAAQS) by December 31, 2001. Our final rule requires the State to submit a plan to EPA within one year of the rule's publication in the Federal Register. The plan shall include, among other things, a demonstration that the Imperial Valley can attain the PM-10 standard as expeditiously as practicable, provides for a required reduction in PM-10 or PM-10 precursors at a rate of 5% per year, and meets EPA's requirements for Best Available Control Measures.

Air Quality in the Imperial Valley:

- We are finalizing this action based on a 2004 proposed rule that used air monitoring data from 1999-2001. Six monitoring stations were in violation of the 24-hour standard for the period starting from the beginning of 1999 through 2001. However, Imperial Valley continues to violate the PM-10 standard based on the three most recent years of data (2004-2006).

Background:

- EPA will work with the District and the Air Resources Board to develop an approvable plan to address best available control measures for serious PM-10 nonattainment areas.

- While there are higher concentrations of PM-10 closer to the US-Mexico border, PM-10 NAAQS violations occur at monitoring locations to the north as well.

- EPA has acknowledged in the past that some of the air pollution problem in Imperial Valley may be due to emissions from Mexico. We also recognize that some violations of the PM-10 standard are due to unforeseeable high winds.

- EPA has been working with the Mexican Government and other stakeholders to improve our understanding of the relative impacts of contributing international sources of air pollution and to develop and implement cost-effective control strategies to reduce those emissions.

- Particulate matter can accumulate in the respiratory system, penetrate deeply into the lungs and can contribute to health effects such as asthma, decreased lung function and alterations in respiratory tract defense mechanisms.

- In September 2006, EPA revised the 1997 Particulate Matter NAAQS. The 2006 standards tighten the 24-hour fine particle (PM-2.5) standard from 65 micrograms per cubic meter ($\mu g/m^3$) to 35 $\mu g/m^3$, and retain the current annual fine particle standard at 15 $\mu g/m^3$. EPA has decided to retain the existing 24-hour PM-10 standard of 150 $\mu g/m^3$ but revoked the annual PM-10 standard.

Additional information:

- For more information, please visit our website at*:* *http://www.epa.gov/region09/air*

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