Federal Climate Policy: Wins, Opportunities, and How Health Orgs Are Weighing In

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State of the Air

For 24 years, the American Lung Association has analyzed data from official air quality monitors to compile the State of the Air report. The more you learn about the air you breathe, the more you can protect your health and take steps to make the air cleaner and healthier.
Resource: “Zeroing In on Healthy Air” Report
Lung.org/EV

• Full Zero-Emission Vehicle Sales in the United States
  • Modeled 100% Passenger Vehicle Sales by 2035
  • Modeled 100% Medium- and Heavy-Duty Vehicle Sales by 2040

• National Power Grid
  • Modeled 100% Non-Combustion Electricity Generation by 2035
Value of Health Coalitions

• More credibility
• More expertise
• Helps bring more health groups on board
• Aligns with people’s values
Health Coalition Partners
Health Coalition Tactics

- Meetings with White House Office of Management and Budget on forthcoming proposals and final rules
- Meetings with EPA Administrator Regan and other officials
- Public comments
- Public hearing participation
- Letters
- Media advocacy
- Ads
- Congressional education
“Don’t Delay, Clean Air Today”

- Unified campaign to roll up rules together
- Coordinates with broader “Solutions for Pollution” effort
- Goal: tie key clean air rules together and push administration to get them across the finish line
EPA Final Rule: Methane Standards for the Oil and Gas Industry

• Limits on methane for new and existing oil and gas industry sources
• Dramatically limits practice of flaring
• Reduces VOCs that endanger health and contribute to ozone
• Finalized after years of advocacy from health and other orgs
• Highlights: Media response, comments, PSR leadership
EPA Final Rule: Updated Soot Standards

- Annual standard now at 9 micrograms per cubic meter (was 12)
- While this is not as strong as the level of 8 that we called for, it’s still significantly stronger
- 24-hour standard stays at 35 micrograms per cubic meter. We pushed hard for 25
- Includes updates to the Air Quality Index and some new requirements that states take environmental justice into account when citing new monitors
- EPA estimates that in 2032, the first year all communities are projected to attain the new standard, the nation will see 4,500 fewer premature deaths, 290,000 fewer lost work days, 800,000 fewer cases of asthma symptoms and 2,000 emergency department visits
EPA Proposal: Heavy-Duty Vehicles

- Put in place more stringent limits on CO$_2$ for new heavy-duty vehicles starting in Model Year 2027
- The limits would get tighter every year through Model Year 2032
- The proposal requires vehicle manufacturers to meet specified emissions limits, which vary by type of vehicle
- Vehicles covered include cabs on tractor-trailer trucks, delivery trucks, garbage and recycling trucks, public utility trucks, transit buses, and school buses
- Currently undergoing final White House review
EPA Proposal: Light- and Medium-Duty Vehicles

- Proposed new multi-pollutant measures to make future light-duty vehicles (like passenger cars, SUVs and light pickups) and medium-duty vehicles (like large pickups, package delivery vans and post office trucks) less polluting
- Builds on the current 2023-2026 standards and would put in place more stringent limits on emissions of both greenhouse gases and of other air pollutants (nitrogen oxides, non-methane organic gases and fine particles) from new light-duty and medium-duty vehicles starting in Model Year 2027
- The limits would gradually get tighter through Model Year 2032
- The proposal requires vehicle manufacturers to meet specified emissions limits, which vary by type of vehicle. The proposal sets strict new limits on particle pollution from gasoline vehicles
- Currently undergoing final White House review
EPA Proposal: Updated Mercury and Air Toxics Standards

- Current limits in place on mercury and air toxics from power plants
- EPA has proposed updated limits; we’re calling on them to:
  - Tighten mercury limits for lignite coal plants
  - Tighten standards for coal-fired power plant emissions of other hazardous metals
  - Require continuous monitoring
- Public comment period closed

Four health and medical groups support EPA's proposed mercury and air toxics rule

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In response to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's proposed rule to reaffirm the appropriate and necessary finding for the Mercury and Air Toxics Standards, the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Lung Association, American Public Health Association and Physicians for Social Responsibility issued the following statement:

"We applaud EPA's proposed rule to reaffirm the 'appropriate and necessary finding' for the lifesaving Mercury and Air Toxics Standards. Without a doubt, protecting the health of babies, children, pregnant people and other at-risk groups from toxic pollution is appropriate and necessary.

"These commonsense standards have a proven track record of success. They have slashed emissions of toxic air pollutants, including mercury and arsenic. Millions are breathing cleaner air because of these protections under the Clean Air Act. The previous administration's attempt to undermine them was unconscionable and unlawful, and we thank EPA for today's proposal to correct it."
EPA Proposal: Carbon Pollution Standards for Power Plants

- Context: West Virginia vs. EPA
- Proposed limits on carbon pollution from new gas, existing coal and existing gas power plants
- 2 major steps in the process affect the fate of an individual power plant:
  1. EPA sets an emissions standard for each type of electric generating unit (EGU, aka power plant)
  2. Each state proposes its own State Implementation Plan to comply with the Clean Air Act (subject to EPA approval)
- Education on technology for health orgs
- More than 100 health orgs on final comments
- Public comment period closed
Get Involved.

Join the American Lung Association in Urging President Biden and EPA:
Don’t Delay, Clean Air Today!

Lung.org/TakeAction