

Air Quality and Transportation Conformity Highlights

*Prepared by the Office of Natural Environment
Federal Highway Administration*



U.S. Department of Transportation
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Announcements and Recent Events

End of Maintenance Period and Conformity

In October 2014, EPA released guidance confirming that transportation conformity no longer applies 20 years after the effective date of the area being redesignated maintenance for a national ambient air quality standard and EPA approval of the first 10-year maintenance plan (CAA § 175(a)), and the approved maintenance plan did not extend the maintenance period beyond 20 years from designation. In other words, conformity requirements no longer apply to metropolitan transportation plans, TIPS, and FHWA/FTA projects after that date for that particular NAAQS. However, conformity requirements will continue to apply for other transportation-related pollutants for which the area is nonattainment or maintenance. The guidance is available on EPA’s website at <http://www.epa.gov/otaq/stateresources/documents/420b14093.pdf>. For questions related to the applicability of conformity at the end of the 20-year maintenance period, please contact Karen Perritt at Karen.Perritt@dot.gov or 202-366-9066, or Cecilia Ho at Cecilia.Ho@dot.gov or 202-366-9862.

MOVES2014 October Release

In response to user feedback from the July 2014 release of MOVES2014, EPA has posted an updated version of the MOVES2014 Installation Suite. The October release fixes an error in the new non-road portion of MOVES 2014, addresses a number of minor issues with the on-road portion, improves the installation process, includes small performance improvements, and fixes an error in the spreadsheet to estimate evaporative emissions from vehicles meeting California Zero Emission Vehicle (ZEV) standards. All MOVES2014 users should install the October release as soon as possible. The updated code and database are available on the MOVES website: www.epa.gov/otaq/models/moves/. The new ZEV spreadsheet is available at www.epa.gov/otaq/models/moves/tools.htm.

U.S. 9th Circuit Court of Appeals Rejects SR 47 Expressway Challenge

On October 30, 2014, a three-judge federal panel rejected an appeal challenge to the SR 47 Expressway linking the ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach to I-405. The proposed SR 47 Expressway is a 1.7-mile elevated roadway. Led by the National Resources Defense Council, environmental groups challenged the proposed roadway arguing that US DOT and Caltrans violated the Clean Air Act and National

Environmental Policy Act by not properly assessing and disclosing how the project would increase fine particulate matter. The court's opinion is available at <http://cdn.ca9.uscourts.gov/datastore/opinions/2014/10/30/12-56467.pdf>.

Research

Annual Transportation Research Board Meeting

The Transportation Research Board (TRB) 94th Annual Meeting will be held in Washington, D.C., from January 11-15, 2015, at its new venue, the Walter E. Washington Convention Center. The program is expected to attract 12,000 transportation professionals from around the world. The TRB Annual Meeting program covers all transportation modes, with more than 5,000 presentations in nearly 750 sessions and workshops addressing topics of interest to all attendees—policy makers, administrators, practitioners, researchers, and representatives of government, industry, and academic institutions. More information is available at <http://www.trb.org/AnnualMeeting2015/AnnualMeeting2015.aspx>.

Reminders

Areas with Insignificant Findings or Limited Maintenance Plans

While these areas are not required to satisfy the regional emissions analysis requirements in 40 CFR 93.118 and/or 93.119, a conformity determination for the plan, TIP, and project that meets the other requirements (such as interagency consultation, timely implementation of TCMs, etc.) of the transportation conformity rule is still required. Also, a hot-spot analysis is still required in CO areas and for projects of air quality concern in PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5} areas. Contact Karen Perritt at 202-366-9066 or karen.perritt@dot.gov with any questions.

FHWA Established Health in Transportation Webpage

This [webpage](#) was designed to be a comprehensive resource on the linkages between transportation and health. Linking health and transportation brings together transportation professionals and health practitioners in a collaborative process to improve transportation decisions. The latest report to be posted, [“Statewide Transportation Planning for Health Communities”](#) presents insights and a flexible model for State Departments of Transportation (DOTs) that choose to integrate public health considerations into their transportation planning and decision-making. Contact Fred Bowers at 202-366-2374 or frederick.bowers@dot.gov.

MAP-21 Highlights on Agency Websites

Presentations, questions & answers, and other vital information surrounding the legislation remain on FHWA's web pages. The CMAQ Program Interim Guidance, webinar presentation slides, and the Q&A can be found on the [MAP-21 website](#). Basic fiscal information is housed on the MAP-21 site as well, although the supplementary tables with more detailed breakdowns on the individual Federal-aid programs are found on the agency's [Laws and Regulations](#) page.

FHWA Proposed Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement (CMAQ) PM_{2.5} Weighting Factor

On August 4, 2014, the [CMAQ PM_{2.5} weighting factor NPRM](#) was published in the Federal Register. The NPRM proposed a weighting factor to be used in calculating the PM_{2.5} set-aside for the CMAQ program as required in MAP-21. The NPRM comment period ended October 3, 2014. Contact Cecilia Ho at 202-366-9862 or Cecilia.Ho@dot.gov for more information.

Revised Interim Guidance on CMAQ Program Operating Assistance under MAP-21

The 2014 Appropriations Act included changes to the Operation Assistance Section of the CMAQ program (23 USC 149(m)). FHWA posted new [CMAQ Interim Guidance on Operating Assistance](#) to implement the MAP-21 changes. Projects for which CMAQ funding was made available, obligated, or expended in FY 2012 could be eligible for operating assistance without a time limitation based on this change. Contact Cecilia Ho at 202-366-9862 or Cecilia.Ho@dot.gov with any questions.

Training Opportunities

Hands-on Training for New Users of MOVES

EPA developed a two-day, hands-on training course for MOVES2014. This detailed course is intended for state and local agency staff that use MOVES2014 for developing emissions inventories for SIP and conformity analyses. The first training was given in Ann Arbor, Michigan, on December 2-3, 2014. The course is not recommended for people who have previously taken the MOVES2010 course, and registration preference is given to those who have not taken the course before. For more information visit EPA's [MOVES training site](#).

National Transit Institute Offers Introduction to Conformity

The National Transit Institute (NTI) is offering an Introduction to Transportation Conformity course that will present basic information about conformity requirements and the relationship of the transportation and air quality planning processes in order to prepare agency staff (federal, state, and local) to participate in interagency consultation and work effectively in resolving conformity issues. The course will be held in Mission, Kansas, on December 10-12, 2014, and in Arlington, Virginia, on March 24-26, 2015. Seating is limited to 35 participants. Register online at: <http://ntionline.com/courses/courseinfo.php?id=84>.

MySQL Training for MOVES Model Users

Two training opportunities are available for MOVES model users. A three-hour webinar provides an introduction to MySQL Query Browser and MOVES interface. A six-hour training over two days will enable users to do MySQL programming and to write his/her own MySQL scripts and to manipulate MySQL databases including MOVES input and outputs. For more information or to schedule training, contact John Byun (Joon.Byun@dot.gov) or Paul Heishman (Paul.Heishman@dot.gov).

Web-based Training Courses Available

A variety of web-based training opportunities are accessible via the FHWA Conformity Website, at http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/air_quality/conformity/training/. Training includes Air Quality Planning, Transportation Conformity, and others. Please contact Karen Perritt at (202) 366-9066 or Karen.Perritt@dot.gov with any questions or comments.

FHWA Resource Center Training Activities

FHWA's Resource Center Air Quality Technical Services Team is available to offer MOVES training, and information is available at the [Resource Center website](#).

Contacts

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[FHWA Resource Center Air Quality Team](#)

Past issues of the *Air Quality and Transportation Conformity Highlights* are available on FHWA's website: http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/air_quality/conformity/highlights/. Please e-mail Victoria.Martinez@dot.gov with any suggestions for future issues.