

Wisconsin Manufacturers and Commerce: EPA decision imperils Wisconsin manufacturing growth

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EPA Decision Imperils Wisconsin Manufacturing Growth

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MADISON – Just days before Christmas, the U.S. EPA notified Gov. Scott Walker that it intends to classify large areas of East and Southeast Wisconsin as “nonattainment” with that agency’s 2015 National Ambient Air Quality Standards for Ozone. Those standards, implemented by the Obama-era EPA, changed the definition of “clean air” from 75 parts-per-billion (ppb) of Ozone down to 70 ppb. U.S. EPA notified Wisconsin that it intends to place all of Racine, Milwaukee, Ozaukee, Waukesha and Washington counties into nonattainment along with parts of Kenosha, Sheboygan, Manitowoc and Door counties. A nonattainment designation brings an additional regulatory burden for air permitting, including the need for offset requirements, which essentially prohibit a nonattainment area from growing any emissions from large sources, such as manufacturers.

WMC’s General Counsel and Director of Environmental & Energy Policy, Lucas Vebber, released the following statement in response:

“What we are seeing here is the failed regulatory agenda of the Obama-era EPA continuing to attack Wisconsin businesses. At a time when Wisconsin’s air quality is the cleanest it has been in decades, EPA is seeking to hold Wisconsin residents and businesses accountable for polluters in other states and even other countries.”

“Business growth in East and Southeast Wisconsin will be greatly impacted by this decision. We need our federal representatives to step up and fight back against this Zombie Obama-EPA regulatory agenda and restore common sense to air permitting.”

Under the Clean Air Act, U.S. EPA was required to give Wisconsin 120 days’ notice before taking action. A final decision is expected in Spring.