



Utah Petroleum Association Applauds EPA for its Acceptance of 179B Demonstration on Wasatch Front

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EPA today proposed a landmark decision, recognizing that Utah has control over only a very small portion of the ozone pollution in the Wasatch Front. Only 25% of NWF ozone comes from Utah man-made sources, i.e., the only part controllable from within Utah. Of this amount, more than half comes from mobile sources (on-road cars and trucks and nonroad such as rail, airports, and construction vehicles) where EPA sets emission limits, not Utah.

The Clean Air Act (CAA) has provisions so that it does not make states and local areas responsible for pollution over which they have no control, such as emissions generated from other countries, from some natural events like volcanoes, and from other exceptional events such as strong wind storms and wildfires.

Section 179B of the Clean Air Act allows an area that does not attain an air quality standard but for international emissions to remain at its current nonattainment level and address all requirements of that level, but not be “bumped up” to a higher level with costly requirements that likely will not bring the area to attain the air quality standard.

“Utah, through strong partnerships with regulators, industry, state, and federal leadership, has consistently driven improvements in air quality – as demonstrated by industry’s commitment to produce Tier 3 fuels, which DAQ has attributed as being the single most impactful action to meet the PM2.5 standard in the Wasatch Front,” said Rikki Hrenko-Browning, President of Utah Petroleum Association. “UPA and its members remain dedicated to working with the state and EPA to further improve air quality and applaud this commonsense and data driven decision to not economically punish regions like the Wasatch Front that have no ability to control emissions coming from outside United States borders.”

Utah Department of Air Quality developed and submitted a 179B demonstration to EPA, which EPA has now proposed to approve. Utah used the latest scientific tools and data to develop the demonstration, which clearly shows the influence of Asian and Mexican emissions on Wasatch Front air quality, consistent with well-established and long-accepted scientific studies. Despite a decade-long trend reducing local ozone-forming emissions in the Wasatch Front by half, local ozone levels actually increased.

The Environmental Protection Agency initially declined Utah’s 179B demonstration for the Wasatch Front when they moved the area to a higher ozone classification. Utah Petroleum Association, along with the State of Utah and other stakeholders, challenged this decision in federal Court. As a result, EPA agreed to evaluate the demonstration and has now proposed to approve it. UPA applauds this decision.