



State of Utah

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Environmental Quality

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**NEWS RELEASE**

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## **Public Comment Begins on State Air Plan**

Salt Lake City, Utah – After three years in the making, the Division of Air Quality’s (DAQ) plan to reduce wintertime pollution along the Wasatch Front and Cache Valley is now before the public. On Oct. 1 the public comment begins on the draft State Implementation Plan (SIP) for PM 2.5 – microscopic pollution that gets trapped during winter inversions and is harmful to health.

During the 30-day public comment period ending Oct. 30, a series of public hearings will be held to provide a summary of the plan and hear what the public has to say about the strategies outlined in the SIP. The plan is required by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to bring Utah’s PM 2.5 levels in compliance with federal health-based standards of 35 micrograms pollution per cubic meter of air by the 2014 deadline with the option of extensions to 2019 after showing annual improvement.

“The draft SIP shows great progress toward meeting the health standard in all of the counties contained in the planning area,” said Bryce Bird, director of DAQ. “We’ve identified many strategies for reducing pollution and will use the comment process to identify additional reductions and refine the plan.”

“Most notably, Bird added, “we will start seeing air quality improvements immediately while still fine-tuning the SIP for EPA approval.”

The Air Quality Board is scheduled to make a decision on the SIP plan before the Dec. 15 deadline for submittal to the EPA.

PM 2.5 is microscopic pollution about 1/40<sup>th</sup> the size of a human hair that is difficult to expel in the lungs once inhaled. Children, the elderly, and people with respiratory disorders such as asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disorder are especially susceptible to its harmful impacts.

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The SIP lists 23 new rules intended to bring all seven affected counties – Box Elder, Cache, Davis, Salt Lake, Tooele, Utah and Weber— into compliance with the federal health standards.

DAQ enlisted the help of stakeholders to develop the plan and created a website where the public can learn about the issue, the SIP development and view proposed rules and strategies along with the full plan. The site can be accessed at: <http://www.airquality.utah.gov/Public-Interest/Current-Issues/pm2.5/index.html>

Public comment hearings will be held on the following days:

**October 15:**

Cache County Public Information & Public Comment Hearing  
Bridgerland Applied Technology Center  
1301 North 600 West  
Rooms 171 D & E  
Logan, Utah  
10:00 a.m. Public Information Meeting  
11:00 a.m. Public Comment Hearing

**October 16:**

Utah County Public Information & Public Comment Hearing  
Mountainland Association of Governments  
Large Conference Room  
586 East 800 North  
Orem, Utah  
10:00 a.m. Public Information Meeting  
11:00 a.m. Public Comment Hearing

**October 17:**

Salt Lake Nonattainment Area Public Information & Public Comment Hearings  
Multi Agency State Office Building  
195 North 1950 West  
DEQ Board Room, Room 1015  
Salt Lake City, Utah  
1:00 p.m. Public Information Meeting  
2:00 p.m. Public Comment Hearing  
5:00 p.m. Public Information Meeting  
6:00 p.m. Public Comment Hearing