



Commonwealth of Kentucky Energy and Environment Cabinet

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EPA Announces Kentucky Meets Updated Lead Standard

Air Monitors Show Attainment with 2008 Standard

FRANKFORT, Ky. (Nov.14, 2011) –The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has announced that Kentucky meets the 2008 National Ambient Air Quality Standard (NAAQS) for lead. In a letter dated Nov. 8, EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson thanked Governor Steve Beshear for Kentucky's continued commitment to improving air quality in the Commonwealth.

"This is great news for Kentucky," Gov. Beshear said. "It's proof that environmental protection and economic development can go hand in hand."

Airborne lead levels have declined dramatically in the U.S. since the transition to unleaded gasoline. Nevertheless, the latest scientific research shows that even low levels of lead exposure can cause a wide range of adverse health effects, most notably in children. Exposures to lead early in life have been linked to learning, memory, and behavioral problems, as well as lower IQ.

In 2008, the EPA substantially strengthened the NAAQS for lead to protect public health. The new standard limits airborne lead pollution to 0.15 micrograms per cubic meter, which is 10 times tighter than previous lead standards. EPA also required that monitors be placed near significant sources of lead emissions. All of Kentucky's lead monitors are showing compliance to the 2008 standard.

Kentucky will continue to monitor for lead to ensure the state remains in compliance.

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