



Regulatory Restrictions

The combination of geographical features and high levels of pollutants produced in the region have resulted in the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) designating the air basins in Riverside County as non-attainment areas (Table AQ-2). This means that due to the high level of pollutants in the region, the area is not expected to meet National Ambient Air Quality Standards in the near future.

The Federal Clean Air Act (1977 Amendments) requires that designated agencies in any region of the nation not meeting national clean air standards must prepare a plan demonstrating the steps that would bring the area into compliance with all national standards by December 31, 1987. In response, the Governor of California designated agencies to develop these plans.

For the South Coast Air Basin and the Salton Sea Air Basin, the agencies designated to develop regional air quality plans are the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) and the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG). The two agencies first adopted an Air Quality Management Plan (AQMP) in 1979 and have revised it several times subsequently, as earlier attainment forecasts were shown to be overly optimistic. Equivalent regional air quality plans were created for the Mojave Desert Air Basin by the Mojave Desert Air Quality Management Basin (MDAQMD) in conjunction with SCAG.

In 1998, the California Legislature enacted the California Clean Air Act (CCAA). The CCAA requires regional emissions to be reduced by 5% per year, averaged over a 3-year period, until attainment can be demonstrated. Each region that did not meet a national or state air quality standard was required to prepare a plan which demonstrated how the 5% reductions were to be achieved. In response, the SCAQMD and MDAQMD revised their air quality plans to meet CCAA requirements.

The latest AQMP, approved in 1997, was designed to meet both federal and state air quality planning guidelines. Strategies for controlling air pollutant emissions in the AQMP are grouped into three “tiers,” based on their anticipated timing for implementation. Tier I consists of the implementation of best available current technology and management practices that can be adopted within five years. Tier II is based on anticipated advancement in current technology and vigorous regulatory action, while Tier III controls consist of implementation measures which first require the development of new technologies.

The MDAQMD adopted its Air Quality Attainment Plan in 1995 to meet state ozone standards and the Attainment Demonstration Plan in 1996 to meet federal ozone standards. While the Mojave Desert Air Basin is classified by the state as a non-attainment area for PM₁₀ (coarse particles larger than 2.5 but smaller than 10 micrometers), state law does not require an air quality plan to meet this standard, and as such, no plan has been adopted.



County of Riverside General Plan - *Hearing Draft*

Air Quality Element



Indirect Source – A facility, building, structure, installation, property, road, or highway which attracts, or may attract, mobile sources of pollution such as cars and trucks.

To achieve the goals and objectives of the air quality plans at the local level, all cities and counties must adopt air quality elements or other elements/plans that fully address air quality as well as implement these plans to achieve compliance with state and federal standards. Local responsibilities for achieving compliance primarily focus on measures that control “Indirect Sources” such as facilities, buildings, structures, installations, real property, roads or highways that attract mobile sources of pollution.