

Proposed EPA Rule Changes with Potential to Affect Criteria Pollutants

1. Reconsideration of regulations on power plants (Clean Power Plan 2.0)

- Although described primarily in terms of GHG (CO₂) standards, power plant rules often also limit or otherwise affect emissions of SO₂, NO_x, and PM. A rollback can therefore change criteria pollutants and precursors levels.

2. Reconsideration of regulations throttling the oil and gas industry (OOOO b/c)

- EPA's New Source Performance Standards (NSPS) for the oil and gas sector (known as "Quad O" rules) address methane and VOC emissions. VOCs are precursors to ground-level ozone (a criteria pollutant). Relaxing or tightening these rules can therefore directly affect ozone precursor emissions.

3. Reconsideration of Mercury and Air Toxics Standards (MATS)

- Although MATS focuses on hazardous air pollutants such as mercury, many of the same pollution controls installed to meet MATS also reduce SO₂ and fine particulate matter. Changing MATS requirements could, in practice, alter criteria pollutant co-benefits, especially for PM and SO₂.

4. Reconsideration of Particulate Matter (PM_{2.5}) National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS)

- PM_{2.5} is itself a criteria pollutant, so changing the PM NAAQS directly affects allowable levels of a criteria pollutant.

5. Reconsideration of multiple National Emission Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants (NESHAPs)

- NESHAPs target hazardous air pollutants, but many of those rules also bring down VOC (an ozone precursor) or particulate emissions as a co-benefit. Any broad modifications could therefore affect criteria-pollutant-related emissions.

6. Restructuring the Regional Haze Program

- The Regional Haze Program typically imposes controls on SO₂, NO_x, and PM (key contributors to regional haze). Rolling back or restructuring these requirements can lead to changes in emissions of those same criteria pollutants.

7. Ending the “Good Neighbor Plan”

- This plan (often referred to under the “Cross-State Air Pollution Rule” umbrella) addressed interstate transport of ozone and fine particulates by requiring NO_x and sometimes SO₂ reductions in upwind states. Eliminating or weakening it directly affects emissions of these criteria pollutants or their precursors.

8. Reconsideration of light-duty, medium-duty, and heavy-duty vehicle regulations that provided the foundation for the Biden-Harris electric vehicle mandate (Car GHG Rules)

- Less EV in future means VOC and Nox emissions won’t go down as much.