



Photo copyright Al Braden

EPA's Good Neighbor Plan: Protecting Communities from Cross-State Air Pollution

EPA's Good Neighbor Plan will protect residents in dozens of states who are unknowingly and unwillingly subjected to harmful air pollution from power plants and industrial facilities often hundreds of miles away.

The Good Neighbor Rule addresses harmful cross-state air pollution

In March 2023, the Environmental Protection Agency released the final Good Neighbor Plan under the Clean Air Act. These vital protections address interstate air pollution and will significantly reduce smog-forming nitrogen oxides pollution from fossil fuel power plants and large industrial sources in 23 states. The pollution discharged from these smokestacks harms people who live near the facilities and contributes to unhealthy smog in communities located as far as hundreds of miles downwind.

How the Good Neighbor Plan works

Air pollution doesn't stop at state lines, and wind can transport smog-causing pollution over long distances and across state borders. This creates serious air quality problems far from the pollution source. The Clean Air Act's Good Neighbor Plan is designed to address this problem and protect people in downwind states from pollution they can't control.

The rule addresses dangerous smog pollution using a combination of approaches proven to limit a key ingredient in smog: ozone season emissions of nitrogen oxides (NOx). Nitrogen oxides are harmful gasses released during the burning of fossil fuels. EPA based the pollution reductions in the rule on nitrogen oxide controls that two thirds of coal-fired power plants already have, but often fail to use effectively.

Public health and environmental benefits of the Good Neighbor Plan

Smog exacerbates and is linked to a variety of serious lung and heart diseases as well as premature deaths. It is especially dangerous for children as their lungs are still developing, but also poses an increased risk to people with asthma, the elderly, and people who are active outdoors.

EPA's proposal would reduce pollution from the power sector by 29% and industry sector by 15% in covered states during the ozone season. The resulting reduction in smog pollution would have significant and immediate benefits for human health and welfare.

By 2026, the proposed rule is projected to annually prevent:

- 1,300 premature deaths
- More than 7,100 cases of onset asthma
- More than 2,100 hospital emergency room visits for breathing problems
- Almost 1.3 million asthma attacks

The Good Neighbor Plan will also bring \$13 billion in health benefits to people across the country. These benefits are projected to occur each year from 2026 through 2042.

EPA has the responsibility to control interstate pollution under the Clean Air Act

The Good Neighbor Plan provisions of the Clean Air Act require that upwind states eliminate emissions that contribute to unhealthy levels of pollution in downwind states. This provision ensures that upwind states do not undermine downwind states' ability to attain and comply with health-based standards.

If an upwind state fails to meet its Good Neighbor obligations through an adequate state plan, the Clean Air Act requires that EPA promulgate a Federal Implementation Plan (FIP) to help restore healthy air quality for millions of people in downwind states.

To carry out its responsibilities under our nation's clean air laws, [EPA proposed a Federal Implementation Plan](#) in April 2022 to ensure that states meet their Good Neighbor obligations for the 2015 Ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standard (NAAQS).

For more information on the Good Neighbor Plan, [visit EPA's website](#).