

7.1.8 The Clean Air Act

1970 Amendments

- Established the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for stationary sources and placed limits on mobile sources.
- Established the New Source Performance Standards (NSPS) which mandated a strict limit on emissions from new pollution sources.
- Expanded on the State Implementation Plans (SIPs) to carry out mandates.

1977 Amendments

- Categorized regions into attainment and non-attainment regions.
- Non-attainment designation occurred if region emitted in excess of any federal standard.
- If a region complied with federal standards, it was designated as a PSD, which stands for "prevention of significant deterioration."
- Lengthened federal deadlines for meeting pollution reduction, particularly with regards to mobile emissions sources.

1990 Amendments

- Established a sulfur dioxide (Sox) and a nitrous oxide (Nox) cap and trade program. Under this program, an emissions cap is set and permits are issued. An emitter of Sox or Nox must have a permit for each unit of pollutant they release. These emissions permits may be trade (bought and sold) amongst polluting parties to minimize cost.
- Mandated the control of 189 hazardous pollutants.
- Updated and expanded provisions of the NAAQS.

Source(s): The United States Congress, Public Law 108-201, The Clean Air Act as amended through February 24, 2004; EPA, The History of the Clean Air Act, accessed February 2011 at <http://www.epa.gov/air/caa/caa_history.html>