



## Canada-Wide Air Quality Management System

The Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment, or CCME, began to implement the Canada-Wide Air Quality Management System (AQMS) in 2013. AQMS is a collaborative and comprehensive approach for reducing air pollution in Canada. It examines all significant sources of air pollution with a primary focus on securing better air quality for improved human health and environmental benefits.

AQMS provides a framework to build on and establish consistency among laws, policies and practices with collaboratively developed Canadian standards and requirements. Designed for flexibility and transparency, AQMS enables governments to effectively respond to the many different air quality challenges across the country so that people better understand what actions are being taken to ensure the quality of air they breathe is safe.

### **AQMS Objectives**

The primary objective of AQMS is to achieve continuous improvement in air quality across Canada and includes:

- new Canadian Ambient Air Quality Standards (CAAQS) to set the bar for outdoor air quality management;
- a framework for air zone management that supports actions to improve air quality;
- Base-Level Industrial Emission Requirements (BLIERs) that establish a base-level of performance for all major industries;
- a national inter-governmental forum to address emissions from the transportation sector; and
- a mechanism to coordinate action when air pollution crosses a provincial or international boarder.

### **Canadian Ambient Air Quality Standards (CAAQS)**

Outdoor air quality criteria, known as CAAQS, help air management zones determine how much and how urgently they need to act to improve air quality. Standards for fine particulate matter (PM<sub>2.5</sub>) and ozone (O<sub>3</sub>) have been developed at the national level. CAAQS are in the process of being developed for sulphur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>) and nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) to be completed by the end of 2015.



### **Air Zone Management**

Air zone reporting under AQMS will begin in 2014, based on 2011-2013 air quality data. Provinces and territories will report on air zone air quality and actions taken to improve air quality in their respective regions.

The implementation of air zones will address the substantial differences in the nature of air quality issues and challenges across the country. Air zones are local management areas within a province or territory that will use existing air monitoring infrastructure and engage strong stakeholder involvement. Air zone management will help jurisdictions achieve continuous improvement in air quality, prevent air quality deterioration, and ensure CAAQS are met.

Provinces and territories will have the flexibility they need to put air zone management in place to meet their unique circumstances. Saskatchewan is divided into six air zones based on industrial sources, geographic, social-economic and meteorological factors.

### **Managing Air Quality**

Emission requirements provide a consistent base-level performance for major emitters across the country to reduce pollution levels of particulate matter, SO<sub>2</sub> and NO<sub>2</sub>. AQMS will not duplicate regulatory efforts but maintain a one-window approach with the Government of Saskatchewan as the lead regulator.

The Saskatchewan industries that will be regulated under the AQMS include petroleum refining, potash, oil sands, fertilizer and chemical production, pulp and paper, upstream oil and gas, electricity, steel and ethanol production in addition to turbines, heater and boilers, and natural gas reciprocating engines.

Transportation is a significant source of air pollutants and greenhouse gas emissions (GHG), which are harmful to the environment and health of Canadians. Governments are currently developing a range of policy and regulatory initiatives aimed at reducing air pollutants and GHG emissions.

Six airsheds have been established across Canada to provide a framework for regional-scale air quality reporting and inter-jurisdictional collaboration, and to help facilitate discussions with the United States on air pollution moving across the international border.

The federal government will use regulations as a backstop to provincial and territorial implementation as well as other instruments for implementing BLIERs, under the *Canadian Environmental Protection Act*.