



The Cross-State Air Pollution Rule

Health and Economic Benefits for New York

To protect states afflicted by air pollution from outside their borders, EPA finalized the Cross-State Air Pollution Rule to reduce harmful emissions of sulfur dioxide (SO₂) and nitrogen oxides (NO_x) from power plants in the eastern half of the U.S. These clean air protections are called for under the “Good Neighbor” provision of the Clean Air Act – a provision ensuring that air pollution discharged by power plants in an upwind state do not contribute to unhealthy pollution levels in downwind states. These protections will help downwind states suffering from this harmful pollution restore healthy air for their citizens and maintain compliance with the health-based national ambient air quality standards.

Under this rule, harmful pollution will be significantly reduced: SO₂ emissions from power plants in the eastern half of the U.S. would be reduced 73% and NO_x emissions would be reduced 54%. Nationally, this rule will save up to 34,000 lives, prevent 400,000 asthma attacks, and avoid 1.8 million lost work or sick days each year once in place. The economic value of these benefits is estimated at \$120–280 billion each year. These benefits don’t even account for the value of increased agricultural crop and commercial forest yields, improvements to visibility, and reduced nitrogen and acid deposition.

New Yorkers will reap vital health benefits from this rule.

The pollution reductions will save up to 2,004 lives¹ in New York and provide about \$16 billion² in benefits to New York each year. These benefits are just those related to avoided mortality, but there are other important health and environmental benefits not quantified here. Under these clean air protections, the quantified health benefits for New York are nearly double what the state spent on health in 2009³—in other words, these billions of dollars in health benefits are very good news for New Yorkers.



¹ U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). “Regulatory Impact Analysis for the Federal Implementation Plans to Reduce Interstate Transport of Fine Particulate Matter and Ozone in 27 States; Correction of SIP Approvals for 22 States,” June 2011. <http://www.epa.gov/airtransport/pdfs/FinalRIA.pdf>

² U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Estimate in 2007 dollars. See excel spreadsheet at: <http://www.epa.gov/airtransport/benefitsmap.html>

³ The U.S. Census reports that New York spent approximately \$8.58 billion on health in 2009: <http://www.census.gov/govs/state/>.