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Contact: Nathan Willcox, 202-683-1250

## **EPA to Save As Many As 34,000 Lives With New Clean Air Protections**

Washington, DC—The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) today announced a historic clean air standard to cut deadly smog- and soot-forming pollution from power plants in the eastern half of the country. EPA estimates that the rule will save as many as 34,000 lives in 2014.

“Today’s announcement is a victory for communities from Texas to Maine that have lived in the deadly shadow of power plant pollution for far too long,” said Nathan Willcox, Federal Global Warming Program Director for Environment America. “We applaud the Environmental Protection Agency and the Obama administration for standing up for Americans’ health and our environment by issuing this much-needed clean air standard.”

For years, air pollution from power plants has triggered thousands of premature deaths and emergency room visits across the country, as well as millions of missed workdays and missed school days. In addition, air pollution from power plants creates acid rain as well as haze that blankets many national parks and forests, decreasing visibility and threatening the health of nearby communities.

The rule announced today, known as the Cross-State Air Pollution Rule, will require reductions in emissions of nitrogen oxides (NOx, which are a key ingredient in smog pollution) and sulfur dioxide (SO2, which is a key ingredient in soot pollution) from power plants in 27 states. Power plants are one of the largest sources of NOx emissions, releasing 1.9 million tons of the pollutant into the nation’s air in 2009, according to the recent Environment America report, “Dirty Energy’s Assault on our Health: Ozone Pollution”. EPA estimates that by 2014, this new rule and other state and federal actions will cut power plant SO2 emissions by 73 percent from 2005 levels and cut NOx power plant emissions by 54 percent. In addition to preventing as many as 34,000 premature deaths, the new rule is expected to prevent 1.8 million missed school or work days by 2014.

Polluters and their allies in Congress have already introduced language in the must-pass Interior Appropriations budget bill in the House of Representatives to block EPA from moving forward on the Cross-State Air Pollution Rule. The bill passed out of subcommittee this morning and will move on to full committee next week.

“Everyone should be able to breathe clean air, and today’s new standard will help bring us closer to fulfilling that promise. We urge Congress to help protect public health by supporting this much-needed standard, and we hope EPA will continue its critical work to protect our health by setting a strong standard to cut mercury pollution from power plants this November,” concluded Willcox.

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*Environment America is a federation of 29 statewide, citizen-based environmental advocacy organizations working toward a cleaner, greener, healthier future. Find out more at*

[www.EnvironmentAmerica.org](http://www.EnvironmentAmerica.org)

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Nathan Willcox  
Federal Global Warming Program Director  
Environment America  
218 D Street SE, 2nd Floor  
Washington, DC 20003  
P: (202) 461-2462 F: (202) 546-2461  
[Nathan@EnvironmentAmerica.org](mailto:Nathan@EnvironmentAmerica.org)  
[www.EnvironmentAmerica.org](http://www.EnvironmentAmerica.org)

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