

the selection and application of models and data bases should also be sought, even in case-by-case analyses. Consistency ensures that air quality control agencies and the general public have a common basis for estimating pollutant concentrations, assessing control strategies and specifying emission limits. Such consistency is not, however, promoted at the expense of model and data base accuracy. The *Guideline* provides a consistent basis for selection of the most accurate models and data bases for use in air quality assessments.

e. Recommendations are made in the *Guideline* concerning air quality models, data bases, requirements for concentration estimates, the use of measured data in lieu of model estimates, and model evaluation procedures. Models are identified for some specific applications. The guidance provided here should be followed in air quality analyses relative to State Implementation Plans and in supporting analyses required by EPA, State and local agency air programs. EPA may approve the use of another technique that can be demonstrated to be more appropriate than those recommended in this guide. This is discussed at greater length in Section 3. In all cases, the model applied to a given situation should be the one that provides the most accurate representation of atmospheric transport, dispersion, and chemical transformations in the area of interest. However, to ensure consistency, deviations from this guide should be carefully documented and fully supported.

f. From time to time situations arise requiring clarification of the intent of the guidance on a specific topic. Periodic workshops are held with the headquarters, Regional Office, State, and local agency modeling representatives to ensure consistency in modeling guidance and to promote the use of more accurate air quality models and data bases. The workshops serve to provide further explanations of *Guideline* requirements to the Regional Offices and workshop reports are issued with this clarifying information. In addition, findings from on-going research programs, new model submittals, or results from model evaluations and applications are continuously evaluated. Based on this information changes in the guidance may be indicated.

g. All changes to the *Guideline* must follow rulemaking requirements since the *Guideline* is codified in Appendix W of Part 51. EPA will promulgate proposed and final rules in the **Federal Register** to amend this Appendix. Ample opportunity for public comment will be provided for each proposed change and public hearings scheduled if requested.

h. A wide range of topics on modeling and data bases are discussed in the *Guideline*. Section 2 gives an overview of models and their appropriate use. Section 3 provides specific guidance on the use of "preferred" air quality models and on the selection of alternative techniques. Sections 4 through 7 provide recommendations on modeling techniques for application to simple-terrain stationary source problems, complex terrain problems, and mobile source problems. Specific modeling requirements for selected

regulatory issues are also addressed. Section 8 discusses issues common to many modeling analyses, including acceptable model components. Section 9 makes recommendations for data inputs to models including source, meteorological and background air quality data. Section 10 covers the uncertainty in model estimates and how that information can be useful to the regulatory decision-maker. The last chapter summarizes how estimates and measurements of air quality are used in assessing source impact and in evaluating control strategies.

i. Appendix W to 40 CFR Part 51 itself contains an appendix: Appendix A. Thus, when reference is made to "Appendix A" in this document, it refers to Appendix A to Appendix W to 40 CFR Part 51. Appendix A contains summaries of refined air quality models that are "preferred" for specific applications; both EPA models and models developed by others are included.

## 2.0 Overview of Model Use

a. Before attempting to implement the guidance contained in this document, the reader should be aware of certain general information concerning air quality models and their use. Such information is provided in this section.

### 2.1 Suitability of Models

a. The extent to which a specific air quality model is suitable for the evaluation of source impact depends upon several factors. These include: (1) The meteorological and topographic complexities of the area; (2) the level of detail and accuracy needed for the analysis; (3) the technical competence of those undertaking such simulation modeling; (4) the resources available; and (5) the detail and accuracy of the data base, i.e., emissions inventory, meteorological data, and air quality data. Appropriate data should be available before any attempt is made to apply a model. A model that requires detailed, precise, input data should not be used when such data are unavailable. However, assuming the data are adequate, the greater the detail with which a model considers the spatial and temporal variations in emissions and meteorological conditions, the greater the ability to evaluate the source impact and to distinguish the effects of various control strategies.

b. Air quality models have been applied with the most accuracy, or the least degree of uncertainty, to simulations of long term averages in areas with relatively simple topography. Areas subject to major topographic influences experience meteorological complexities that are extremely difficult to simulate. Although models are available for such circumstances, they are frequently site specific and resource intensive. In the absence of a model capable of simulating such complexities, only a preliminary approximation may be feasible until such time as better models and data bases become available.

c. Models are highly specialized tools. Competent and experienced personnel are an essential prerequisite to the successful application of simulation models. The need for specialists is critical when the more

sophisticated models are used or the area being investigated has complicated meteorological or topographic features. A model applied improperly, or with inappropriate data, can lead to serious misjudgements regarding the source impact or the effectiveness of a control strategy.

d. The resource demands generated by use of air quality models vary widely depending on the specific application. The resources required depend on the nature of the model and its complexity, the detail of the data base, the difficulty of the application, and the amount and level of expertise required. The costs of manpower and computational facilities may also be important factors in the selection and use of a model for a specific analysis. However, it should be recognized that under some sets of physical circumstances and accuracy requirements, no present model may be appropriate. Thus, consideration of these factors should lead to selection of an appropriate model.

### 2.2 Levels of Sophistication of Models

a. There are two levels of sophistication of models. The first level consists of relatively simple estimation techniques that generally use preset, worst-case meteorological conditions to provide conservative estimates of the air quality impact of a specific source, or source category. These are called screening techniques or screening models. The purpose of such techniques is to eliminate the need of more detailed modeling for those sources that clearly will not cause or contribute to ambient concentrations in excess of either the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS)<sup>4</sup> or the allowable prevention of significant deterioration (PSD) concentration increments.<sup>2,3</sup> If a screening technique indicates that the concentration contributed by the source exceeds the PSD increment or the increment remaining to just meet the NAAQS, then the second level of more sophisticated models should be applied.

b. The second level consists of those analytical techniques that provide more detailed treatment of physical and chemical atmospheric processes, require more detailed and precise input data, and provide more specialized concentration estimates. As a result they provide a more refined and, at least theoretically, a more accurate estimate of source impact and the effectiveness of control strategies. These are referred to as refined models.

c. The use of screening techniques followed, as appropriate, by a more refined analysis is always desirable, however there are situations where the screening techniques are practically and technically the only viable option for estimating source impact. In such cases, an attempt should be made to acquire or improve the necessary data bases and to develop appropriate analytical techniques.

### 2.3 Availability of Models

a. For most of the screening and refined models discussed in the *Guideline*, codes, associated documentation and other useful information are available for download from EPA's Support Center for Regulatory Air Modeling (SCRAM) Internet Web site at <http://www.epa.gov/scram001>. A list of