

ARS to audit particulate operations near Wyoming mining facility

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ARS was recently selected to conduct an independent Performance Evaluation Program (PEP)-equivalent audit on a particulate monitoring program operating near Green River, Wyoming. This is a highly industrial area concerned with trona ore mining (the raw material of soda ash, or sodium carbonate). The monitoring program uses a local air quality station to continuously collect a wide variety of air quality and meteorological parameters, including PM_{2.5} (particulate matter ≤ 2.5 microns). This routine air quality monitoring collects data to assess regional background concentrations of atmospheric pollutants, including particulate matter (PM_{2.5} or particulate matter ≤ 2.5 microns), to support air quality impact analyses associated with Prevention of Significant Deterioration (PSD) permitting efforts for the soda ash industry. A PEP-equivalent audit is required to ensure the monitoring program is consistent with all pertinent Environmental Protection Agency regulations and guidance.

An ARS field specialist will install the audit sampler and train a Tata Chemicals employee to exchange the filters for a 30-day period later this summer. The filters will be analyzed by Chester LabNet. The audit sampler will be installed adjacent to the routine PM_{2.5} sampler, and side-by-side comparisons of data concentrations will be compared to determine how accurate and precise the routine PM_{2.5} sampler performs on a regular basis.