



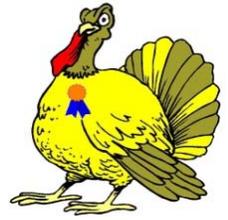
THE RSC GOLDEN TURKEY AWARD

“All We Are Is Dust in the Wind”

April 2011

The RSC Golden Turkey Award highlights absurd – yet obscure – government regulations. These bureaucratic rules hit taxpayers’ wallets with a one-two punch. First you pay to enforce them, then you pay to follow them.

IN THIS MONTH’S EDITION: The Environmental Protection Agency is considering a revision to the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for Coarse Particulate Matter. Coarse Particulate Matter is more commonly known as dust.



The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) currently regulates [Coarse Particulate Matter](#) under the Clean Air Act. These regulations were originally targeted at soot, but a recent [Draft Policy Assessment](#) is considering new, more stringent standards for regulating Coarse Particulate Matter (PM10), or “dust,” that would be devastating to rural America.

Dust is a necessary byproduct of agricultural activity, and farmers have developed best-practices to combat it because of their incentive to conserve their land and protect their families’ well-being. Many activities essential to farming and agribusiness involve dust, including driving down an unpaved road.

The EPA contends that it has the authority to regulate farm dust as part of the National Ambient Air Quality Standards established under the Clean Air Act. The EPA is considering implementing regulations that could change the current standard from 150 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ to 65-85 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$, which would push many areas into or near “nonattainment.” This is unreasonable given the likelihood that once an area is designated as nonattainment, activities such as tilling soil, harvesting crops, moving livestock, and driving down unpaved roads are likely to become regulated activities, subject to fines of \$37,500 a day for violations.

The EPA acknowledges that more stringent standards are not necessary to protect public health. In fact, EPA’s own assessment acknowledges scientific uncertainty in the justification to change the current standard. In contrast, making the standard more stringent would prevent job creation, raise input costs for farmers, and greatly slow economic development throughout rural America.

Americans are demanding commonsense, responsible solutions to economic recovery rooted in scientific evidence that encourage innovation and job creation. To counter this potential threat by the EPA, Rep. Kristi Noem (R-SD), offered [amendment #563](#) to the Full Year Continuing Appropriations Act. This amendment was agreed to by a [roll call vote of 255-168](#). Additionally, Rep. Noem led the effort on a bipartisan letter to EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson, [signed by 101 Members of Congress](#). By her actions, Rep. Noem has sent a clear message to the EPA: revised dust standards are unnecessary, would stifle economic growth in rural areas, and would cause severe economic strain our farmers and ranchers. It’s only fitting that the EPA receives the RSC Golden Turkey Award for insisting that we are more than dust in the wind.

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