



Energy and Environmental Affairs

EEA Home > Regulations Issued to Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions

CHARLIE BAKER
GOVERNOR

For Immediate Release - August 11, 2017

KARYN POLITO
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

MATTHEW A. BEATON
SECRETARY

Baker-Polito Administration Issues Regulations to Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Reach Global Warming Solutions Act Goals

BOSTON – In accordance with Governor Charlie Baker's [Executive Order 569](#), *An Order Establishing an Integrated Climate Change Strategy for the Commonwealth*, the Baker-Polito Administration today issued final regulations that build upon the Commonwealth's nation-leading efforts to further reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and protect communities, residents, and infrastructure from the impacts of climate change. The [regulations](#), published by the Secretary of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and developed with significant stakeholder input, seek to ensure the Commonwealth achieves the greenhouse gas emissions limits for 2020, required by the Global Warming Solutions Act of 2008.

"Combatting and preparing for the impact of climate change remains a top priority of our administration, and requires collaboration across state government and with stakeholders throughout Massachusetts," **said Governor Charlie Baker**. "These regulations will help ensure the Commonwealth meets the rigorous emission reductions limits established in the Global Warming Solutions Act in order to protect our residents, communities, and natural resources from the effects of climate change."

"Our Administration has worked with urgency to develop sensible, effective regulations that will continue the Commonwealth's efforts to continue achieving nation-leading greenhouse gas emission reductions," **said Lieutenant Governor Karyn Polito**. "The final rules were carefully crafted with significant stakeholder engagement from across the state, demonstrating a balanced approach to combating climate change while continuing to grow our economy and build strong communities."

To position the Commonwealth to meet its emission reduction limits under the Global Warming Solutions Act (GWSA), the final regulations lay out an approach to reduce GHG emissions from multiple sectors. Pursuant to the GWSA, in 2010 the Secretary of Energy and Environmental Affairs established a 2020 GHG emissions reduction limit of 25 percent below 1990 emissions levels and the GWSA requires at least an 80 percent reduction by 2050.

As of 2014, the Commonwealth had reduced emissions by 21 percent from 1990 levels, leaving about 4 percent remaining to achieve the 2020 goal. The six final regulations announced today will, along with other Commonwealth climate policies, ensure that this goal is achieved by addressing emissions from the natural gas distribution network, the transportation sector, the electric sector, focusing on generation and consumption, and gas insulated switchgear. The rules ensure that state agencies are "leading by example" with their use of more efficient and advanced technology vehicles, complement Massachusetts' nation-leading portfolio of clean energy programs, including the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative, and address other sources of carbon dioxide emissions.

The regulations address:

- Carbon Dioxide Emission Limits for the Commonwealth's State Fleet Passenger Vehicles;
- Global Warming Solutions Act Requirements for Transportation;
- Reducing Methane Emissions from Natural Gas Distribution Mains and Services;
- Increasing clean energy through the development of a Clean Energy Standard;
- Reducing Carbon Dioxide Emissions from Electricity Generating Facilities; and
- Reducing Sulfur Hexafluoride Emissions from Gas-Insulated Switchgear.

"Combatting climate change requires that we do as much as we can to avoid the worst impacts of climate change by reducing emissions, while also working to build resilience and adapt to ongoing impacts that we're already experiencing across the state," **said Energy and Environmental Affairs Secretary Matthew Beaton**. "Completion of these regulations in under a year marks a significant milestone towards implementing Governor Baker's Executive Order on Climate Change and demonstrates our continued commitment and leadership on this issue."

Under Section 2 of Executive Order No. 569, the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) was directed to publish proposed regulations by December 16, 2016, hold public hearings on the proposed regulations by February 24, 2017, and finalize those regulations by August 11, 2017. The Executive Order's requirements followed a decision by the Supreme Judicial Court, in the case of *Kain v. DEP*, where the court ruled that the steps mandated by the GWSA include promulgation of regulations by MassDEP that establish declining annual aggregate limits on multiple GHG emission sources or categories of sources. The Executive Order also directs the state to begin planning for climate

change adaptation and working with cities and towns across the state to assess vulnerability and build resiliency to address climate change impacts.

"The Commonwealth benefitted from extensive public comment on these issues," **said MassDEP Commissioner Martin Suuberg**. "We received more than 300 comments in this process, and reviewed the information submitted carefully to develop these final rules."

"Thanks to the Legislature's passage of the Global Warming Solutions Act, Massachusetts continues to lead the nation in reducing harmful emissions and protecting the health of all of our residents," **said Senate President Stanley Rosenberg (D-Amherst)**. "This new set of regulations will help ensure that we achieve the goals set out in the original Act."

"Massachusetts emerged as a national leader in the fight against climate change with the creation of the Global Warming Solutions Act. Achieving its rigorous emission reduction targets will require programs spanning multiple sectors of our economy. I applaud the Department of Environmental Protection for taking a strong step forward in reducing the Commonwealth's emissions by completing these regulations. We must continue taking bold action to make a meaningful impact in our state's carbon future," **said State Representative Frank Smizik (D-Brookline), Chairman of the House Committee on Global Warming and Climate Change**.

"These rules re-establish the Commonwealth as a national leader in developing sensible, enforceable standards to transition our economy to a low-carbon future," **said Brad Campbell, president of the Conservation Law Foundation**.

"Much more needs to be done, and Governor Baker's leadership will be essential to getting neighboring states to take meaningful action to prepare New England for the energy future being shaped by the Paris climate agreement."

While the final, official version of the rules are published in the Massachusetts Register, an electronic version, the public comments received and other information about MassDEP's rules can be found at this [portal](#).