

Role

The Texas Senate Bill 5, enacted in 2001, establishes the Texas Emissions Reduction Plan (TERP):

- A diesel emissions reduction incentive program
- A motor vehicle purchase or lease incentive program
- A new technology research and development program
- An energy efficiency grant program
- Building energy performance standards

Excessive ground-level ozone is a threat to public health.

High accumulations of ozone in the lower atmosphere near ground level can be harmful to people, animals, crops and other materials. In fact, health specialists say that ground level ozone can cause serious lung damage and difficulty in breathing, especially among children, older adults and people with respiratory problems. Ground-level ozone can also cause shortness of breath, coughing, wheezing, headaches, nausea and eye irritation.

Excessive ground-level ozone is also a threat to our economy.

Federal Clean Air Act amendments of 1990 outline severe restrictions that may be imposed by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) on regions which fail to comply with certain specific air quality standards. These restrictions include limits on the growth of businesses in the region, and in some cases, non-compliance may also result in the loss of federal highway funds.

Obtaining Clean Air Emissions Reductions

Obtaining clean air emissions reductions credits for reduced electrical energy use is one of the most cost effective, non-intrusive ways to meet EPA mandates for the Clean Air Act. ESL is working closely with the several state entities to assist local governments and private industry to improve air quality and save money by more efficiently using electricity and fossil fuels.

ESL's Role within Senate Bill 5

With the passage of the Texas Senate Bill 5, the Energy Systems Laboratory was assigned an important role in the Texas Emissions Reduction Plan (TERP) including the following responsibilities.

- To report energy savings to the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) for the purpose of assisting Texas to obtain emissions reduction credits in the State Implementation Plan (SIP) with the US EPA.
- To assist communities in evaluating code amendments to the International Residential Code (IRC) and the International Energy Conservation Code (IECC) which now define the minimum energy efficiency standards for the State of Texas.
- To train builders, code inspectors and officials, manufacturers, homeowners and other interested groups on how to cost effectively implement the energy efficiency standards of the codes.
- To develop a self-certification form for builders outside of municipalities.
- To develop a standardized report format to be used by providers of home energy ratings that will provide potential buyers information on a structure's energy performance.
- Requires the Laboratory to establish a public information program to inform homeowners, sellers, buyers, and others regarding home energy ratings.

More on Senate Bill 5