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EPA

Tailpipe emissions rule sent for White House review

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EPA yesterday sent its revised tailpipe emissions rule to the White House Office of Management and Budget for review, but the details of the proposal are largely unknown.

"They're definitely holding it close to the vest," said Dan Becker, a transportation expert at the Center for Biological Diversity.

It was widely expected that EPA and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, a division of the Department of Transportation, under President Biden would craft aggressive new clean car standards that would spur the adoption of electric vehicles.

Yet it's unclear whether the proposed rule, which is expected in July, is comparable to Obama-era standards or something more akin to California's voluntary deal, which is less stringent.

The clean car standards set by former President Obama were some of the most significant climate regulations in the United States, where carbon emissions from cars are the largest contributor to climate change.

The Trump administration repealed California's waiver under the Clean Air Act, which gave the Golden State the legal authority to set tougher tailpipe pollution rules, and significantly scaled back Obama-era fuel economy standards for cars, which sparked a number of lawsuits from blue states, green groups and other interests.

That resulted in a voluntary agreement between the California Air Resources Board and several major automakers last year, which requires companies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from cars and light trucks 3.7% annually, though some maintain that the number is ultimately closer to 2.5%.

It's more stringent than the Trump administration's rule but less aggressive than the 5% reduction required by the Obama administration.

On his first day in office, Biden signed an executive order to examine former President Trump's environmental rulemakings (*[Climatewire](#)*, Feb. 1).

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