

8.3 Are there any exceptions to these basic QA test requirements?

Yes. Table 17 indicates that there are some exceptions to the basic QA test requirements and frequencies for year-round reporters. For instance:

- Linearity checks are not required for SO₂ or NO_x monitors with span values of 30 ppm or less;
- For calendar quarters in which a unit operates for less than 168 hours, limited exemptions from linearity checks and limited extensions of RATA deadlines are available;
- For monitors with two spans and ranges, limited exemptions from linearity checks may be claimed for calendar quarters in which a particular measurement range (e.g., the high range) is not used;
- RATAs of SO₂ monitors are not required if the unit exclusively combusts “very low sulfur fuel” (as defined in §72.2) or limits combustion of higher-sulfur fuel(s) to 480 hours per year or less;
- For calendar quarters in which a particular fuel is combusted for less than 168 hours, limited extensions of fuel flowmeter accuracy test deadlines are available to Appendix D units; and
- For calendar quarters in which the optional fuel flow-to-load ratio test is performed and passed, limited extensions of fuel flowmeter accuracy test deadlines are available to Appendix D units.

The low-span linearity check exemption described in the first bullet item above and the SO₂ RATA exemption described in the fourth bullet item can continue in effect indefinitely, as long as the conditions are met. However, the test extensions and exemptions described in the second, third and sixth bullet items have definite limits.

For instance, no more than three consecutive linearity check exemptions may be claimed---i.e., a linearity check is required at least once every four quarters, regardless. Similarly, a RATA deadline may not be extended beyond 8 calendar quarters from the quarter of the previous test, and the accuracy test deadline for a fuel flowmeter may not be extended beyond 5 years (20 quarters) from the quarter of the previous test.

However, EPA recognizes that circumstances beyond the control of the source owner or operator sometimes arise, such as a forced unit outage, which may prevent a linearity check or RATA from being done in the calendar quarter in which it is due. To provide regulatory relief in these instances, Part 75 allows the test to be done in a grace period, immediately following the end of that quarter.

For a linearity check, the grace period is 168 unit operating hours, and for a RATA it is 720 unit operating hours. Provided that the “late” QA test is performed and passed on the first attempt within the grace period, no loss of emissions data is incurred.