



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION III- OFFICE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS
1650 Arch Street Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19103-2029
Phone - 215/814-5100 Fax - 215/814-5102

EPA Environmental News

Bonnie Smith, 215-814-5543, smith.bonnie@epa.gov

EPA grant helps Virginia Middle Peninsula schools reduce diesel exhaust pollution

PHILADELPHIA (April 11, 2008) – In the next year, students who ride buses from the Virginia Middle Peninsula schools will be breathing cleaner air, thanks to a grant from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to reduce pollution in diesel-powered school buses.

EPA's Clean School Bus USA program awarded \$143,068 to Hampton Roads Clean Cities to work with several Middle Peninsula school districts to retrofit over 100 school buses. The average bus ride for students benefitting from this project is an hour or more. The new pollution-control equipment, coupled with the use of cleaner burning fuel and the encouragement of less engine idling of school buses, will substantially reduce soot and exhaust pollutants.

"Breathing diesel exhaust can be harmful, especially for children with asthma," said Regional Administrator Donald S. Welsh. "We're pleased that Hampton Roads Clean Cities is taking action so students can breathe cleaner air and live healthier lives."

The grant will be used by the school districts to install diesel oxidation catalysts on 100 buses, switch to cleaner burning fuel for 198 buses, promote reduced engine idling and purchase one new clean alternative propane-powered bus. The retrofit equipment in combination with ultra low sulfur diesel fuel can reduce pollution emissions from the diesel buses by 60 to 90 percent.

"In addition to obvious clean air and health benefits, the Clean School Bus award supports or complements many components of the effort to preserve the sensitive Dragon Run watershed in Virginia's middle peninsula," said Al Christopher, Executive Director of Virginia Clean Cities.

- more -

To View All Press Releases: <http://www.epa.gov/region03/news.htm>

Clean School Bus Hampton Roads

Page Two - April 11, 2008

In April 2003, EPA launched its Clean School Bus USA program to help reduce children's exposure to diesel exhaust. The particles in diesel exhaust can penetrate deep into the lungs and pose health risks including aggravating asthma symptoms. Children are especially vulnerable to the effects of diesel emissions and air pollution because their respiratory systems are still developing and they have a faster breathing rate.

For more information on the agency's Clean School Bus USA program and other National Clean Diesel Campaign programs, including current available funding for clean diesel projects, visit <http://www.epa.gov/diesel>.

###

To View All Press Releases: <http://www.epa.gov/region3/r3press/r3press.htm>