



Protecting Our Environment

Retrofitting Engines Improves Air Quality

(NAPSA)—An estimated 160 million people live in nonattainment areas for ground-level ozone, also called smog, which is formed by nitrous oxides and other pollutants. About 65 million people live in areas that violate air quality standards for particulate matter. Reducing nonroad emissions is a critical part of the effort by federal, state, local and tribal governments to reduce the adverse health impacts of air pollution.

The Transportation Equity Act, signed into law by President Bush on August 10, 2005, contains important nonroad provisions. One is that states will be able to use funds included in the bill for Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) programs to purchase diesel retrofit controls for construction equipment used in federally funded highway projects.

Diesel retrofits are one of the most cost-effective emissions reductions strategies eligible for funding under the CMAQ program according to the Washington (DC) Council of Governments and the Transportation Research Board. Diesel retrofits can be more than 3 times as cost-effective as buying new vehicles in reducing pollution.

Total CMAQ program funds included in the bill amount to approximately \$12 billion (over six years). The transportation bill directs states and metropolitan planning organizations to give priority in the distribution of CMAQ funds to diesel retrofits (especially where they are required under



A new government program is helping clear the air by funding diesel retrofits.

construction contracts) which provide air quality benefits.

EPA estimates there are 600,000 off-road vehicles that will be used on construction sites in non-attainment areas, 200,000 of which will be retired, 200,000 of which will be eligible for engine rebuild/repower and 200,000 of which will be eligible for aftertreatment. The agency believes that about \$3 billion of CMAQ funds could be used to retrofit these vehicles. Other vehicles that could be retrofitted under the CMAQ provisions include trucks and transit buses.

Immediate action

Because new vehicles and engines are purchased gradually over time to replace older units, diesel retrofit programs such as this one are important to help make a difference in the immediate future.

To learn more about diesel retrofits and other government programs designed to help reduce air pollution, visit www.epa.gov.