



Donald L. Carcieri
Governor

NEWS

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DEM RECEIVES \$1.73 MILLION IN FEDERAL STIMULUS FUNDING FOR CLEAN DIESEL PROGRAM

*Funds Will be Used to Replace or Retrofit State and Municipal-Owned
Diesel Equipment to Reduce Emissions*

PROVIDENCE – The Department of Environmental Management has received \$1.73 million in American Recovery and Investment Act funding through the US Environmental Protection Agency for the RI Clean Diesel Program. The funding will help reduce diesel emissions and protect human health and the environment for Rhode Islanders through replacement or retrofitting of state-owned and municipal-owned diesel equipment and for shore-power installations at state ports.

These stimulus funds will help to continue Rhode Island's efforts to reduce diesel equipment emissions under the Clean Diesel Program. Currently, over \$3.5 million of federal Congestion Mitigation Air Quality (CMAQ) program funds have been earmarked to address emissions from school buses operating in the state. An earlier EPA grant of \$180,000 under the federal Diesel Emissions Reduction Act is to be used to retrofit state-owned diesel equipment at T.F. Greene Airport. The second year of this grant will be matched in part by air pollution settlement money to add an additional \$500,000 to continue retrofits of state-owned diesel vehicles.

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“This grant, made available to Rhode Island through the Recovery Act, allows the state and our cities and towns to reduce emissions and dramatically improve our air quality,” said Governor Donald L. Carcieri. “Reducing emissions from diesel vehicles is one of the most important air quality challenges we face, and it critical that we find alternatives that reduce emissions that are cost effective for the taxpayers. These retrofits do just that – improve our air quality and extend the life of the vehicle. This grant will allow the state and our cities and towns to retrofit or replace 255 vehicles, reducing our diesel emissions by 1.8 tons per year.”

According to the EPA, exposure to diesel exhaust, even at low levels, is a serious health hazard and can cause respiratory problems such as asthma and bronchitis. Asthma affects more than one in nine children in New England, and is currently the number one cause of missed school days for children in the United States.

“This Recovery Act funding will provide a great boost to Clean Air investments in Rhode Island,” said Ira Leighton, acting regional administrator for EPA’s New England office. “This money will help the state to bolster its economy, protect public health and create green jobs that improve air quality.”

“Despite the vast improvements in our state’s air quality over the past two decades, diesel exhaust continues to pose a threat to human health because of the tiny particles in diesel exhaust that can lodge deep within human lungs and cause asthma attacks and other pulmonary disorders,” noted DEM Director W. Michael Sullivan, PhD. “The Clean Diesel program will reduce the overall emissions from diesel-powered vehicles and equipment through the installation of retrofit devices, replacement of older diesel equipment, and providing reliable alternate power sources where diesel emissions can be eliminated or reduced. DEM welcomes the additional funding provided by the federal government for this program and looks forward to implementing this important initiative.”

The retrofit component of the program will involve installing diesel emissions reduction retrofit devices on selected state-owned and municipal-owned diesel powered vehicles and equipment. Replacement of several diesel-powered vehicles in the state fleet, as well as those owned by various municipalities throughout the state, will reduce emissions by replacing older fleet vehicles with equipment containing 2007 or later model year compliant engines.

Several state agencies and municipalities have requested funding through the program to retrofit diesel equipment with exhaust controls and filters. \$213,900 is being considered to retrofit as many as 68 trucks and pieces of diesel equipment in the state fleet owned by DEM, RIDOT, RIDOC, RIAC, URI, and NBC. In addition, as many as 59 refuse vehicles owned by various municipalities may be retrofitted at a cost of \$265,500. Finally, \$359,600 is being considered to retrofit 113 DPW vehicles owned by various municipalities. To date, Barrington, Bristol, Central Falls, Charlestown, Coventry, East Greenwich, Exeter, Johnston, Lincoln, Newport, Pawtucket, Providence, Tiverton Warwick, and Westerly have all requested to be considered under the program.

Reductions in the amount of pollutants released into the air will begin immediately after the retrofit devices are installed in the diesel-powered vehicles or equipment. Emissions reductions will continue throughout the useful life of the devices, potentially up to 10 years or longer.

Shore power facilities will be installed or upgraded at state-owned ports. Facilities at Quonset Point, Galilee and Newport are being considered. These installations will allow for docked vessels to obtain their power from the dock-side facilities and turn off onboard diesel equipment normally used to supply energy to the vessels. The shore power improvements also will contribute to the viability and support of the commercial fishing industry through both shore-based energy saving and onboard fuel savings. \$150,250 in grant funding is being considered at this time for the equipment, design and installation of these idle-reduction technologies at the ports.

Certified vehicle and equipment replacement funding will provide the state and municipalities with 25 percent of the cost of replacing 14 older dump trucks and equipment with newer, more efficient equipment. Funding to replace state-owned equipment is currently estimated at \$253,750, and \$227,500 will be used to replace equipment owned by several interested municipalities.

The funding also includes up to \$259,500 for administrative costs to implement the program.

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