



South Coast Air Quality Management District

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NEWS

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SCAQMD Calls for Continuation of Federal Funding to Replace Dirty Diesel Trucks and Equipment

Southland air quality officials applauded the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency today for announcing the availability of \$11 million in grant funding for cleaner diesel engines and called for the continuation of the cleanup fund.

EPA announced the funding through its Diesel Emission Reduction Program (DERA) to modernize diesel fleets by retrofitting vehicles with cleaner, more efficient diesel engines. However, funding for DERA -- a program with strong bipartisan support -- has been eliminated in the Trump Administration's proposed EPA budget for the coming fiscal year.

"The federal government's DERA funding has been extremely helpful in replacing older, dirty diesel trucks in Southern California with newer, cleaner models," said Wayne Nastri, executive officer for the South Coast Air Quality Management District. "We urge the Trump Administration to continue funding for this program so that all Southern Californians can breathe cleaner air."

Heavy-duty (aka "big-rig") trucks are the No. 1 source of smog-forming nitrogen oxide emissions in the Southland. In addition, diesel emissions from trucks and other sources are responsible for more than two-thirds of the total cancer risk from air pollution. Diesel pollution also disproportionately impacts low-income, environmental justice communities.

SCAQMD's recently adopted 2016 Air Quality Management Plan calls for a 45 percent further reduction in nitrogen oxide emissions in order to meet a 2023 deadline for achieving a national air quality standard for ground-level ozone. A stricter ozone standard will require a 55 percent reduction by 2031.

"Achieving these reductions, especially in such a short timeframe, will require additional regulations but also significant financial incentives to help truck owners transition to cleaner trucks," Nastri said. "This is why programs such as DERA are so important to improving air quality and public health in our region."

Since DERA's inception in 2008, EPA has awarded nearly 690 grants across the nation. Many of these projects fund cleaner diesel engines that operate in economically disadvantaged communities, where residents suffer from higher-than-average instances of asthma, heart and lung disease.

DERA funding helps support EPA's West Coast Collaborative, an ambitious partnership between leaders from federal, state, local and tribal government, the private sector, and environmental groups committed to reducing diesel emissions along the West Coast.

The SCAQMD is the air pollution control agency for Orange County and major portions of Los Angeles, San Bernardino and Riverside counties.

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