

CLEAN AIR BOARD
of Central Pennsylvania, Inc

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Citizens Petition DEP and PennDOT
for Diesel Anti-Idling Regulations**

Harrisburg, PA (October 18, 2006) – To jump-start the regulatory process and to accelerate the arrival of cleaner, healthier air for all Pennsylvanians, a group of doctors, clergy, educators, concerned citizens, and municipal officials today asked the Rendell Administration to enact anti-idling regulations on commercial diesel vehicles. Reducing the time a truck or bus spends idling will cut the level of dangerous fine dust (particulate) emitted into the air across the state.

The Clean Air Board of Central Pennsylvania, Inc. (CAB) presented petitions to DEP and PennDOT Wednesday containing language to limit idling by commercial diesel vehicles. Due to an extensive interstate road system and favorable geography, Pennsylvania has become a transportation and distribution hub for the nation. Every truck that uses Pennsylvania roads, rest stops and truck facilities, and idles over a long period of time, adds pounds of pollutant dust to the state's air.

Rev. Jennifer McKenna, President of CAB, noted the importance of fast action on these petitions, saying: "There's no reason young children, older residents and people suffering from respiratory ailments should be forced to breathe diesel exhaust when it can be controlled." She reminded us that; "The earth is God's creation; and we are here to care for it and all the people on it."

The proposed regulations apply to commercial diesel vehicles 10,001 lbs, GVW or greater, designed to operate on highways. After April, 2010, idling by these diesel vehicles would be limited to five (5) minutes per hour. Until then, diesel vehicles would be allowed to idle for prolonged periods only at fleet terminals, truck stops or PennDOT designated rest areas under certain cold or hot weather conditions. The proposed regulations encourage the use of idle reduction technologies and auxiliary power units (APUs) to reduce diesel exhaust emissions.

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Police, emergency, public safety, military and armored car vehicles are exempt from these regulations. Commercial passenger buses would be allowed to idle while passengers are boarding and when passengers are on board.

“We have asked both DEP and PennDOT to adopt these regulations to enable both state and local law enforcement officers to administer the restrictions,” said Thomas Au, a CAB Board member and former DEP attorney.

Because PA is the only mid-Atlantic state without idling restrictions, trucks from neighboring states cross our borders where they can idle with impunity at all but a few places in the Commonwealth. As result, DEP estimates that over 13,000 diesel vehicles idle in PA for up to 10 hours *each day* during mandatory rest periods. These proposed restrictions are in line with those of neighboring states. New Jersey limits idling to three minutes per hour; New York State’s limits are five minutes; New York City has three minutes; and the City of Philadelphia allows only two minutes.

How bad is the fine particulate pollution problem?

Some or all of eighteen counties in Pennsylvania, including Dauphin, Lebanon, Lancaster, York and Cumberland, have been designated by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) as “non-attainment” areas for the fine particulate air quality standard under the Clean Air Act. These areas have “unhealthy air”, exceeding the health based concentration limits for fine particulate matter (also known as PM_{2.5}) established by the act.

“Fine particulate matter (PM_{2.5}) from diesel exhaust is one of the most toxic substances known today;” said Philip Carey, MD, representing the Cumberland County Medical Society, whose membership rang the first alarm bell in August of 2005. “The scientific evidence of its harmful effects from acute and chronic exposure is overwhelming.”

Kevin Stewart, Director of Environmental Health of the American Lung Association of Pennsylvania, emphasized, “Particle pollution is a serious problem in many areas of Pennsylvania where eight million people live. Diesel exhaust is an important part of this form of air pollution that threatens the young, the elderly, and those with chronic lung and heart disease. Controlling diesel idling is simply common sense.”

Idle Reduction Supported by local trucking firms, state and municipal officials.

Keen Transport Vice President, Jesse Keen, who with other Carlisle area transportation firms has led a voluntary effort to curb idling, said; “We at Keen can live with this. It makes good business sense to turn off truck engines when driver comfort, safety or operational issues are not a concern.”

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CAB has also secured written support for measures to reduce idling from the Cumberland County Medical Society, the Western Cumberland County Council of Governments, and the Mayor of Carlisle, Kirk Wilson. The City of Philadelphia and Allegheny County have enacted and enforced idling regulations for some time. Carmen I. Paris, MPH, the Interim Health Commissioner for the Philadelphia Dept of Public Health and Roger Westman, Manager, Air Quality Program for the Allegheny County Health Department, have signed statements underscoring the importance of idling regulations to air quality and the public health in the two largest cities in the state.

EPA will review Pennsylvania's plan for clean up.

Under the Clean Air Act, the EPA has given Pennsylvania a mandate to clean the air by 2010 or face reduced highway funding and tougher growth restrictions. Pennsylvania has until 2008 to present a plan to attain the fine particulate health standard to the EPA. The EPA can accept or reject the state's plan, if it finds that the plan is inadequate. The Clean Air Board (CAB) wants that process to start now with these idling limitations.

"CAB recognizes that this is a first step and other measures need to be adopted by DEP before our air quality meets the health standards. However, another year has passed since the local medical community and CAB raised this issue with Harrisburg. So, before more innocent citizens are affected, the time is now to attack this problem!" insisted Rev. McKenna, President of CAB.

In 2005, when the EPA designations of non-attainment were issued, the fine particulate limits were 65 micrograms per cubic meters ($\mu\text{gm}/\text{m}^3$) for the 24-hour exposure limit and 15 ($\mu\text{gm}/\text{m}^3$) for the annual exposure limit. The 24-hour exposure limit was recently revised to 35 ($\mu\text{gm}/\text{m}^3$). DEP air quality data show these health limits are being exceeded regularly.

What happens next in Harrisburg?

The Department of Environmental Protection has 30 days to review the petition for completeness before presenting it to the state's Environmental Quality Board (EQB). After the EQB accepts the petition, public hearings will be scheduled. CAB's expects DEP and PennDOT will coordinate their review of these petitions and act with all due haste.

Need to know more?

To schedule separate interviews with Rev. Jennifer McKenna, Dr. Phil Carey, or Thomas Au, or for further information on this issue or on CAB, please contact Bill Turner, (717) 432-2088, visit www.cleanairboard.org or email cleanairboard@gmail.com.

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To contact Kevin Stewart of the American Lung Association, please call 717-397-5203 or email kstewart@lunginfo.org.

(Notes: About Clean Air Board of Central PA, Inc.)

Alarmed by the deteriorating air quality in Cumberland County caused by PM_{2.5} (soot), as noted in a public letter signed by over three quarters of Cumberland Co physicians, the Clean Air Board of Central Pennsylvania (CAB) was formed in September of 2005. With input from residents, educators, health professionals, government, and industry, CAB's goals are to raise community awareness and to have air pollution in Central Pennsylvania reduced to levels at which our air is safe to breathe.

(Notes: Defining the problem and source of pollution)

Particulate matter, or PM, is the term for particles found in the air, including soot, dust and smoke. It consists of gases and carbon. The smallest of these particles measure less than 2.5 micrometers (microns) or roughly 1/30th the width of a human hair. It is generated by coal-fired power plants and vehicles burning diesel fuel. These tiny particles carry 40 toxins and 3 known carcinogens past the body's natural defenses into the deepest part of the lungs and eventually into the blood stream.

PennDOT data indicates that 6,000 to 7,000 trucks use the Miracle Mile portion of Rt. 11 east of Carlisle everyday. Currently, over 700 truck parking spaces exist in three major truck service facilities near Carlisle in Middlesex Twp, Cumberland County. Approximately 600 of these spaces are occupied with idling trucks at least 10 hours per day. EPA tests show that an idling truck produces 3.68 grams of PM_{2.5} per hour. Thus, approximately 18,000 lbs. (9 tons) of PM_{2.5} per are emitted from these truck facilities. Additionally, several million square feet of truck serviced warehousing exists in Cumberland County and plans for several million more square feet have been approved.

Understandably, Carlisle - Harrisburg - Lebanon is one of three mid-sized metro service areas (MSA) in Central PA ranked in the ten worst in the nation for exceeding standards for chronic fine particle (soot) pollution.¹ The Clean Air Task Force (CATF) estimates the risk of contracting cancer in Cumberland County is 393 times greater than the "acceptable" risk published by the EPA. Diesel pollution causes 39 premature deaths, 61 non-fatal heart attacks, 715 asthma attacks and 4,258 lost work days in the Carlisle-Harrisburg area; plus, thousands of emergency room visits by children suffering respiratory distress occur each year in PA due to diesel soot pollution²

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¹ *Plagued by Pollution*, a survey of the environmental agencies in all 50 states and Wash., D.C., on 2004 pollution levels by PennEnvironment, a statewide advocacy organization consisting of over 15,000 citizen members; www.pennEnvironment.org.

² Clean Air Task Force web site; Diesel Soot Health Impacts; State, County and Metro Service Area screens; www.catf.us/projects/diesel/dieselhealth/