



news releases

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**SECOND ROUND OF VOLKSWAGEN SETTLEMENT FUNDS TO SUPPORT
DEPLOYMENT OF HEAVY-DUTY ELECTRIC VEHICLES, WITH EMPHASIS
ON IMPROVING AIR QUALITY IN ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE COMMUNITIES**

(19/P045) TRENTON – Demonstrating its commitment to clean transportation and improving urban air quality, the Department of Environmental Protection announced today that it is requesting approval from the Volkswagen Environmental Mitigation Trustee to disburse \$16 million for the deployment of electric heavy-duty garbage trucks, school buses, and port-related vehicles.

This is the DEP's second round of requests for funding from the state's \$72.2 million share of federal settlements to resolve claims that Volkswagen installed emissions defeat devices in vehicles it manufactures to emit air pollutants without being detected by emissions-testing programs across the nation.

"The projects to be funded by this second round of grants will improve air quality in environmental justice communities that have for too long have had to bear a disproportionate burden of air pollution and its health consequences," Commissioner Catherine R. McCabe said. "These projects also will demonstrate the viability of using electric heavy-duty vehicles to improve air quality in urban areas and throughout the state."

The projects are:

- Red Hook Terminals LLC, Port Newark, 10 electric yard tractors;
- United Airlines, Newark Airport, 39 electric ground support equipment;
- City of Jersey City, five electric garbage trucks;
- IKEA Distribution Services North America, four electric terminal tractors and five "last mile" electric delivery trucks in Westampton, Camden, Jersey City, Hoboken, and Cherry Hill;
- Best Transportation, Port Newark, four electric yard tractors;
- Regional Industries LLC, Elizabeth, five electric garbage trucks;
- Student Transportation of America Inc., Trenton, five electric school buses;
- International Motor Freight, Port Newark, one electric drayage (short-distance shipping) truck;
- Hudson County Motors Inc., Essex and Hudson counties, four electric drayage trucks.

As part of its first round of funding from the Volkswagen Mitigation Trust, the DEP earlier this year requested \$11.2 million for charging stations and electric transit buses for NJ TRANSIT's use in Camden. The Trustee has approved those funds for immediate release to New Jersey.

Two partial consent decrees approved in 2016 and 2017 established a \$2.93 billion environmental mitigation trust to provide funds to all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and federally recognized tribes to implement actions to counter the air quality impacts of excess nitrogen oxide emissions resulting from the emissions defeat devices.

In New Jersey, transportation sector emissions account for 71 percent of nitrogen oxide emissions as well as 42 percent of greenhouse-gas emissions. Nitrogen oxides are a major contributor to smog, which forms when pollutants interact with sunlight and hot temperatures during warmer months to create ground-level ozone molecules.

Ozone is beneficial in the upper atmosphere by shielding harmful rays from the sun but is a health hazard at ground level. Ozone irritates tiny lung sacs known as alveoli and can increase asthma attacks in asthmatics and make people more vulnerable to lung diseases such as pneumonia and bronchitis. Long-term exposure to ozone particles can cause lung inflammation, chest pain, coughing, wheezing, sneezing, pulmonary congestion and scarring of lung tissue.

While ground-level ozone levels in New Jersey have been improving in recent years, the state continues working to meet federal health-based standards for the pollutant. The process is difficult, however, because New Jersey is heavily urbanized and in the middle of one of the nation's busiest transportation corridors. The state is also impacted by smog transported by prevailing winds from older, dirtier power plants in upwind states.

To learn more about the performance, availability and comfort of electric vehicles, as well as how to save money and reduce pollution, visit www.drivegreen.nj.gov.

For more information about the Volkswagen settlement and the DEP's Beneficiary Mitigation Plan, visit www.nj.gov/dep/vw/.

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