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# NEWS

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **EPA Clean School Bus Grants to Fund Biodiesel Programs in Five States**

*More schools turn to biodiesel to reduce toxic emissions*

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. – School districts in five states will receive funding to use cleaner burning biodiesel fuel through an Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) program designed to reduce both children's exposure to diesel exhaust and the amount of air pollution created by diesel school buses. The school districts receiving funding are in Colorado, Iowa, Michigan, Montana and Rhode Island.

In October 2003, the EPA announced the first grants under the Clean School Bus USA demonstration grants program – a cost-shared program designed to help school districts clean-up their school bus fleets. Last year, twelve school districts in the Denver metropolitan area received funding to pay for biodiesel. Building on those 2003 grants, Congress again allocated \$5 million for school bus retrofit and replacement grants in 2004. EPA announced the selection of 20 diverse demonstrations around the nation for funding in June, 2004, five of which will use biodiesel.

"We're ecstatic about being able to use biodiesel again," said Jeff Knasiak, director of transportation for Manchester, Michigan Public Schools, which is one of the EPA grant recipients requesting biodiesel. "We had a great experience when we used biodiesel in the past and noticed an amazing decrease in the amount of exhaust and fumes. There were never any start-up problems, even during cold Michigan winters."

Details on the use of biodiesel in the Clean School Bus USA demonstrations include:

- **Ann Arbor and Manchester, MI Public Schools:** The Ann Arbor Public Schools will equip 110 buses with diesel oxidation catalysts. The Manchester Public Schools, a nearby small school district, will operate its fleet of 18 buses on B20. As a pilot for the area, Ann Arbor will also install crankcase filtration systems in three buses.
- **Littleton, CO Public Schools:** Littleton Public Schools will use the \$21,406 allocated through the program to continue funding the additional cost of the district's use of B20 (a blend of 20 percent biodiesel and 80 percent regular diesel fuel) for their entire fleet of 67 buses.

*(more)*

- **Iowa Foundation for Education Administration:** The Bus Emission Education Program (BEEP) will partner with school districts throughout the state of Iowa to replace three older school bus engines and install diesel oxidation catalysts on 126 school buses, which will be fueled with various blends of biodiesel.
- **Missoula, MT Area Clean School Bus Program:** The Missoula City-County Health Department has received \$4,550 to fund the additional cost of biodiesel fuel for two companies that provide bus service in Missoula County District One, Bonner, Florence, Target Range, Woodman and DeSmet School Districts. Eight buses will run on B20.
- **Warwick, RI Public School Department:** Warwick Public Schools will retrofit at least 40 school buses with pollution control devices. Warwick is the first community in Rhode Island to undertake a school bus retrofit project. The Warwick Public School Department will equip 20 buses with particulate matter filters and 20 buses with diesel oxidation catalysts. In addition, they will fuel their entire fleet of 72 school buses with a blend of ultra low sulfur diesel and biodiesel.

Biodiesel can be made from any fat or vegetable oil, such as soybean oil, and works in any diesel engine with few or no modifications. It is nontoxic and biodegradable. Biodiesel can be blended with petroleum diesel at any level or used in its pure form. In 1997, the Medford, New Jersey School District was the only school in the nation to run its fleet with the cleaner burning fuel. Today, approximately 50 school districts nationwide have chosen biodiesel as a means of reducing school children's exposure to harmful emissions.

Many of the schools using biodiesel are in farming states where soybean growers have invested millions of soybean checkoff dollars into the successful commercialization of biodiesel. The United Soybean Board has funded important research that verifies the benefits of biodiesel to human health and much more.

Biodiesel is the only alternative fuel to have completed the rigorous Health Effects testing required by the Clean Air Act. Results, submitted to EPA, show biodiesel emissions reduce by 80 to 90 percent cancer causing compounds called Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbons (PAH) and nitrated PAH. EPA studies show the exhaust emissions of particulate matter from pure biodiesel are about 47 percent lower than overall particulate matter emissions from diesel. Breathing particulate has been shown to be a human health hazard. Biodiesel also reduces emissions of total unburned hydrocarbons, a contributing factor to smog and ozone, by about 68 percent. Carbon monoxide is reduced by about 48 percent. Lifecycle carbon dioxide is reduced by 78 percent.

About 400 major fleets use biodiesel nationwide. Biodiesel has similar horsepower, torque and BTU content compared to petroleum diesel. It offers excellent lubricity and higher cetane than diesel fuel. Biodiesel is registered with the EPA as a fuel and fuel additive.

*Readers can learn more about biodiesel by visiting <http://www.biodiesel.org>. For more on the Clean School Bus USA program, visit: [http://www.epa.gov/otaq/schoolbus/demo\\_projects.htm#2004](http://www.epa.gov/otaq/schoolbus/demo_projects.htm#2004).*