

# ALERT! June 2006

ALERT! is a monthly update on transportation and air quality planning activities in the Delaware Valley.



## TRANSPORTATION – AIR QUALITY

### **Clean Diesel Regulations to Take Effect in June.**

Beginning on June 1<sup>st</sup>, refiners and importers of diesel fuel must ensure that the sulphur content of 80 percent of the volume of the highway diesel fuel that they produce is reduced from 500 parts per million (ppm) to 15 ppm. This 97 percent reduction in sulphur content is a necessary first step to ensure the proper function of pollution control technology that is legislated for model year 2007 heavy duty diesel trucks and buses. High sulphur content in fuel tends to clog exhaust control devices in diesel engines much the same way that lead in gasoline inhibited the function of catalytic converters. Removing sulphur from diesel fuel creates an opportunity to implement a wider range of emission control technologies.

Fuel that meets the 15 ppm sulphur content is referred to as Ultra Low Sulfur Diesel (ULSD). Retail outlets carrying ULSD are required to make the fuel available by October 15, 2006. All cars, trucks and SUVs, whether diesel or gasoline powered and regardless of engine size, will be required to meet the same emissions standards by 2009. All diesel fuel sold in the U.S. for highway use is required to be ULSD by October 1, 2010.

EPA estimates that implementation of the Clean Diesel legislation for highway vehicles will result in an annual reduction of NO<sub>x</sub> emissions by 2.6 million tons and a corresponding 110,000 ton annual reduction in particulate matter emissions. Implementation of this legislation is expected to prevent 8,300 premature deaths, 5,500 cases of chronic bronchitis and 17,600 cases of acute paediatric bronchitis annually.

For more information on the implementation schedule of ULSD for highway and off-road use, please visit the Clean Diesel Fuel Alliance at [www.clean-diesel.org](http://www.clean-diesel.org).

### **Tax Credits and Rebate Programs Encourage the Purchase of Alternative Fuel Vehicles**

The Energy Policy Act of 2005 established tax credits for hybrid and clean fuel vehicles purchased in 2006. Tax credits of up to \$3,400 are available for hybrid and alternative fuel vehicles identified by the IRS. The full tax credit applies to the first 60,000 hybrid or "clean fuel" vehicles sold by each manufacturer. The credit is then reduced by 50% beginning the second calendar quarter after the milestone sale. The credit is further reduced to 25 percent of the allowance in the fourth and fifth calendar quarters after the milestone sale is reached. No credits will be issued after the fifth calendar quarter following the milestone. Regardless of the number of



**SAVE  
THE  
DATE**

**Friday,  
June 9<sup>th</sup>, 2006  
PennDOT Bicycle/Pedestrian  
Checklist Training  
8:00 am**

DVRPC Conference Center  
ACP Building, 8<sup>th</sup> Floor  
6<sup>th</sup> and Race Streets  
Philadelphia, PA

**Monday,  
June 20<sup>th</sup>, 2006  
Philadelphia Diesel  
Difference Working Group  
Meeting  
10:00 am**

DVRPC Conference Center  
ACP Building, 8<sup>th</sup> Floor  
6<sup>th</sup> and Race Streets  
Philadelphia, PA

vehicles sold, the credit expires in 2010. Credits are also available to offset the cost of home refuelling equipment for alternative fuel vehicles.

The State of Pennsylvania will also be offering rebates for hybrid and dedicated alternative fuel vehicles beginning in July 2006. The Pennsylvania DEP issued \$1.5 million in hybrid vehicle rebates in 2005.

*For more information on tax credits for alternative fuel and hybrid vehicles, please visit [www.fueleconomy.gov](http://www.fueleconomy.gov).*



## **OTHER NEWS**

### **Recent Poll Shows Environment is Priority for City Voters**

A recent poll commissioned by Citizens for Pennsylvania's Future (PennFuture) and conducted by G. Terry Madonna showed that 56 percent of residents and 48 percent of business leaders surveyed ranked improvement of the city's "physical environment", including improvements to parks and water and transportation infrastructure, as priority issues for the mayor and City Council.

One of the possible explanations for the environment's importance to survey respondents was the significant number of people who have been impacted by environmental problems. For example, more than 20 percent of respondents claimed to have experienced basement flooding after storm events. Seventeen percent claimed that a family member has missed school or work due to breathing problems, potentially aggravated by poor air quality. A majority of respondents said that they would support increased spending to improve air and water quality, update water and sewer systems and improve parks among other initiatives.

Over 200 businesses and more than 600 Philadelphia residents participated in the survey. The margin of error for the survey is +/- 4 percent for the residential category and +/- 6.9 percent for businesses. PennFuture hopes to use survey data to assist development of formal policy recommendations by November.

### **Pennsylvania and New Jersey Receive "B" on School Bus Pollution Report Card**

The Union of Concerned Scientists released its annual School Bus Pollution Report Card in May. The report card analyzes the amount of particle pollution emitted by the average state school bus based on fleet age, fuel choice and investment in retrofit technology. Particle pollution from school buses is a particular concern because of the potential for higher exposure for children in or near buses. Particle pollution can exacerbate respiratory problems such as asthma and bronchitis. Children are especially susceptible to the effects of particle pollution because they generally breathe more air per pound of body weight than adults.

The report also graded the states on secondary categories of Cleanup Programs and Tailpipe Emissions of Smog Forming Pollutants. Pennsylvania scored "average" for Programs and "above average" for Smog Pollution Emissions. New Jersey scored "poor" for Programs and "above average" for Smog Pollution Emissions.

*The entire School Bus Pollution Report Card can be viewed at [www.ucsusa.org](http://www.ucsusa.org)*

ALERT! is a DVRPC publication.



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