

# Alert

dvrpc

February 2021

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



## Air Quality Regulations

### Toyota Agrees to Pay \$180 Million in Fines for Clean Air Act Violations.

In January, 2021, the U.S. Attorney's Office in Manhattan announced that the Toyota Motor Company agreed to pay a \$180 million fine for longstanding violations of the Clean Air Act. This fine is the largest civil penalty ever levied for a breach of federal emissions-reporting requirements.

The New York Times reported that the global automaker systematically failed to report defects that interfered with how its cars controlled tailpipe emissions, violating standards designed to protect public health and the environment from harmful air pollutants from about 2005 to 2015.

Prosecutors maintain that Toyota management and staff in Japan knew about the defects but failed to address them, resulting in the automaker potentially selling millions of vehicles that violated clean air standards. Toyota has agreed not to contest the fine although the company maintains it addressed the emissions control defects as soon as management learned about the situation.

Toyota's penalty is for delayed or missing reports to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) on emissions-related defects and has not been treated as an attempt to cheat at emissions tests. As part of this settlement, Toyota has agreed to make mandatory twice-yearly compliance reports to the U.S. EPA.

Toyota is the world's second-largest automaker behind Volkswagen, and once built a reputation for producing low emissions vehicles, such as the Prius gasoline-electric hybrid passenger cars. More recently, Toyota has been slow to adopt electric vehicle technologies while focusing production on sports-utility vehicles which bring higher profit margins.

According to a recent report from the U.S. EPA, Toyota vehicles delivered some of the worst fuel efficiency in the industry, leading to an overall worsening of mileage and pollution from passenger cars and trucks in the United States for the first time in five years.

To learn more about the U.S. EPA's settlement with the Toyota Motor Company, please visit: <https://www.epa.gov/newsreleases/united-states-and-toyota-motor-company-reach-agreement-decade-long-noncompliance-clean>.



## Save the Date

**Friday  
February 26, 2021**

**Application Deadline Driving  
PA Forward Electric Vehicle  
Charging Station Rebate  
Program**

**For more information,  
please visit:**

**[www.depgis.state.pa.us/  
DrivingPAForward](http://www.depgis.state.pa.us/DrivingPAForward)**

**Tuesday  
March 16, 2021**

**Application Deadline U.S. EPA  
Diesel Emission Reduction Act  
Grants**

**For more information,  
please visit:**

**[https://www.epa.gov/dera/  
national](https://www.epa.gov/dera/national)**



## Air Quality News

### U.S. EPA Announces Funding to Replace Diesel Vehicles

On January 15, 2021, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced the availability of grant funding to implement projects which reduce emissions from the nation's existing fleet of older diesel engines. The U.S. EPA anticipates awarding approximately \$46 million in Diesel Emissions Reduction Act (DERA) grant funding to eligible applicants nationwide. The grants will be awarded through the U.S. EPA's regional offices. Both Region 2, which includes New Jersey, and Region 3, which includes Pennsylvania, will each have \$2.5 million to award to these projects. The U.S. EPA anticipates awarding between 40 and 70 assistance agreements under this program.

Diesel-powered engines transport most of the nation's freight tonnage. Nearly all highway freight trucks, locomotives, and commercial marine vessels are powered by diesel engines. The U.S. EPA is soliciting applications for projects that significantly reduce diesel emissions and exposure, especially from fleets operating at goods movements facilities in areas designated as having poor air quality. Applicants may request funding to upgrade or replace diesel-powered buses, trucks, marine engines, locomotives, and non-road equipment with newer, cleaner technologies. Priority for funding will also be given to projects that engage and benefit local communities and applicants that demonstrate their ability to promote and continue efforts to reduce emissions after the project has ended.

Eligible applicants include regional, state, local or tribal agencies, or port authorities with jurisdiction over transportation or air quality. Nonprofit organizations may apply if they provide pollution reduction or educational services to diesel fleet owners or promote air quality and clean transportation. Applicants may apply until March 16, 2021.

To learn more about the 2021 DERA program, please visit: <https://www.epa.gov/dera/national>.

### U.S. EPA Releases Annual Automotive Trends Report

On January 6, 2021, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) released its annual Automotive Trends Report, which provides the public with a single source of information about new light-duty vehicle greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, fuel economy, technology data, and auto manufacturers' performance in meeting the agency's GHG emissions standards. The report shows that fuel economy has declined from the pace set in previous years and that reducing emissions through innovation remains a priority for automotive manufacturers.

Fuel economy for Model Year (MY) 2019 was 24.9 miles per gallon, lower than MY 2018 by 0.2 mpg. Since MY 2004, when the fleet averaged 19.3 mpg, fuel economy, and CO<sub>2</sub> emissions have improved in 12 out of 15 years.

The report also assesses compliance performance for individual automakers, and for the U.S. fleet, with the GHG emissions standards for light-duty vehicles. This year's report shows that only three large manufacturers complied with MY 2019 standards based on technology factors of their vehicles alone. When accounting for credits, however, the report shows all large manufacturers are in compliance. Eleven out of 14 large manufacturers used a combination of technology improvements, banked credits, and purchased credits to maintain compliance in MY 2019.

These trends are influenced by a number of factors including relatively low fuel prices and popularity of bigger, and less fuel efficient, sport-utility vehicles which reached a record high share of the light-duty vehicle market in 2020.

To read the full Automotive Trends Report, please visit: <https://www.epa.gov/automotive-trends>.



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