

# A!ert



November 2022

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



## Health and Air Quality

### The American Lung Association Publishes Report Quantifying the Benefits of Zero-Emissions Trucks

The American Lung Association (ALA) published a report in October 2022 on the benefits of transitioning the nation's Medium and Heavy Duty (MDHD) Truck fleets to zero-emission or electric vehicles. The report titled "Zeroing in on Healthy Air: A National Assessment of the Health and Climate Benefits of Zero-Emission Transportation and Electricity" builds on an earlier analysis on the benefits of moving away from fossil fuels in the transportation and power generation sectors. This report focuses on how the transition away from traditional diesel trucks and toward non-polluting technologies can yield major benefits to public health, air quality, and the climate.

According to the ALA, in 2020 MDHD vehicles represented approximately six percent of all the on-road vehicles, but emit 59 percent of ozone- and particle-forming Nitrogen Oxide (NO<sub>x</sub>) emissions, 55 percent of fine particle pollution (PM<sub>2.5</sub>) emissions, and 26 percent of transportation-based greenhouse gas emissions. These vehicles include heavier pick-up trucks, delivery and parcel vans, short- and long-haul trucks, and tractor trailers.

The report highlights the potential benefits of adopting zero-emission trucking across the United States with a specific focus on areas near trucking corridors with 8,500 or more trucks trips per day. The analysis calculates the benefits of the zero-emission trucks by examining county-level health benefit data for those areas containing major trucking routes. Health benefits are based on the scenario where 100% of new MDHD vehicle sales are zero-emission by the year 2040 and 100% of electricity generation is from renewable and non-combustion sources by 2035. This scenario was then compared against a business-as-usual case.

The report estimates that this transition will provide \$735 billion in public health benefits, avoid 66,800 premature deaths, and avoid 8.5 million missed workdays nationally between 2020 and 2050. The report includes the calculated benefits for Philadelphia, Bucks, and Montgomery Counties, noting that these counties could have some of the "largest potential health benefits" in the nation from the transition to electric MDHD vehicles and clean energy generation.

The ALA notes the adoption of the California "Advanced Clean Truck" regulation is a key step for states to electrify the MDHD fleet. This regulation requires an increasing percentage of new truck sales (federal highway Classed 2b to Class 8) be zero emission vehicles by 2035. New Jersey and New York are two of six states that have already adopted the Advanced Clean Truck rule.



## Save the Date

**Tuesday  
November 15, 2022  
2:00 – 4:00 p.m.**

**PennDOT Workshop:  
EV Charging Funding**

College Hall (Room 144)  
Montgomery County Community College  
340 DeKalb Pike  
Blue Bell, PA

Register at:  
<https://forms.office.com/g/zIDbubcqDZ>

**Tuesday  
November 22, 2022  
10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.**

**PennDOT Workshop:  
EV Charging Funding**

DVRPC Offices  
190 N. Independence Mall West  
Philadelphia, PA

Register at:  
<https://forms.office.com/g/zIDbubcqDZ>

The ALA report concludes that many of the benefits of adopting zero-emissions MDHD trucks would accrue in disadvantaged communities with higher populations of low-income families and people of color because they are often located near ports or high trucking corridors.

Read more about the ALA's "Zeroing in on Healthy Air Report", including an interactive map that shows the calculated health benefits for select metropolitan areas, at [www.lung.org](http://www.lung.org).



## Air Quality and Transportation

### New York Plans to Move Forward with Congestion Pricing Plan for Manhattan

The Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA), New York City's transit agency, published a funding study ([Central Business District Tolling Program](#)) in August that advances a congestion pricing plan for Manhattan. The plan is the first of its kind in the nation and is designed to reduce vehicle traffic in the city while providing a funding boost to the city's transit agency. The proposed zone that would be subject to the congestion pricing tolls would run from 60th Street to Battery Park but does not include the F.D.R. Drive or the West Side Highway. The plan evaluates tolls ranging from \$9 to \$23 for passenger vehicles with E-Z Pass and between \$12 and \$82 for trucks. Tolls would vary based on the time of day.

New York state lawmakers authorized the MTA to develop the congestion pricing plan in 2019 but the plan was delayed by the COVID-19 pandemic and Governor Cuomo's resignation. Governor Hochul supports the plan and hopes to implement congestion pricing as early as 2023.

The plan includes toll exemptions for vehicles carrying a person with disabilities and emergency vehicles as well as state tax credits for people whose primary residence is inside the district and make less than \$60,000 per year. Rates could also vary between delivery trucks and noncommercial passenger vehicles. Proposals are also considering putting caps on multiple tolling events for vehicles entering and leaving the zone more than one time per day.

MTA is projecting a \$2.5 billion deficit in 2025 and while the fee structure has not yet been finalized, the state law enabling the congestion tolls requires the program to raise \$1 billion annually. The new revenues would be dedicated to addressing the deficit as well as funding improvements to city's bus, subway, and commuter rail systems.

Since tolls would be collected on roads on federally funded roadways, the transportation agencies are required to assess how the policy will impact people in disadvantaged communities and the plan will ultimately require federal approval. If the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) approves the plan, congestion pricing could begin in New York by the end of 2023. FHWA could require a full environmental impact statement, which would significantly delay implementation of the plan.

New York's transportation agencies held public meetings on the proposal in August and the proposal is not without opposition both from the public and politicians from both parties from inside and outside of New York State. Members of the public cited that it is not always possible to take transit as an option to driving, especially for people who are disabled and cannot navigate the transit system or for workers that need to transport equipment to do their jobs. Politicians from the outer boroughs and even New Jersey oppose the plan as "double taxation" because commuters from these places already pay tolls to enter Manhattan. Opponents from these areas also claim that the plan will shift congestion and its attendant pollution into surrounding areas as drivers and trucks seek to avoid the tolling zone.

New York looks to London, where congestion pricing was implemented in 2003, to avoid some early mistakes in adopting this controversial program. London has seen a decline in emissions by 15 percent since initiating the program but officials in London advise that congestion pricing must be accompanied by ample public transportation options to ease the transition.



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