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Environmental NEWS RELEASE



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EPA KICKS OFF MIDWEST CLEAN DIESEL LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

CHICAGO (Jan. 24, 2007) — U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Region 5 hosted the first meeting of its Midwest Clean Diesel Leadership Group yesterday in Chicago. The group of 32 public-sector and private-industry organizations shares the goal of cutting emissions from one million diesel engines in the region by 2010.

The Leadership Group is co-chaired by Cummins Inc., Illinois Environmental Protection Agency, Ohio Environmental Council and EPA Region 5.

“EPA helped form the Leadership Group to accelerate efforts toward cleaner air,” said EPA Region 5 Administrator Mary A. Gade. “Cleaning up diesel emissions in this country will take a concerted, collaborative effort of public and private organizations, and this group will bring greater visibility, energy and resources to this effort.”

“From schoolchildren to truck drivers, millions of Americans are exposed everyday to dangerous emissions from America’s aging fleet of diesel-powered vehicles and heavy equipment,” said Staci R. Putney McLennan, director of clean air programs at the Ohio Environmental Council. “The good news is that cost-effective pollution-control technologies are available. We look forward to collaborating with industry and government representatives to tackle this important challenge.”

“We look forward to sharing the strategies and approaches we have used in Illinois with our colleagues from other Midwestern states,” said Illinois EPA Director Doug Scott. “We are also interested in learning about strategies others have found effective, as well as how we all can maximize the clean air benefits from the ongoing technological advances.”

“This initiative is about fostering a collaborative environment where we all work together for cleaner communities,” said Brian Mormino, director of government relations for Cummins Inc. “Cummins is pleased to step forward with our public and private partners to lead this effort. We have made a significant investment to meet EPA’s emissions standards for new engines and know that we can accomplish much more by leveraging our relationships to address those already in operation today.”

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EPA created the Midwest Clean Diesel Initiative to reduce emissions from older, existing diesel engines not covered by EPA's stringent standards for cleaner fuels and new, cleaner engines. MCDI estimates that more than 3 million diesel engines in the Midwest would benefit from the use of cleaner fuels and idle-reduction and diesel-retrofit technologies and strategies. These include rebuilding, re-powering, replacing, refueling and retrofitting these engines with emission control devices. Already, the public-private partnership has undertaken more than \$30 million in projects, affecting 350,000 engines, and reducing air pollution by more than 3.5 million pounds per year.

Diesel emissions contain large amounts of nitrogen oxides and fine particles (soot). Nitrogen oxides are precursors of ozone (smog), which is a lung irritant, and fine particles can aggravate respiratory and heart diseases. EPA has found that fine particles from diesel engines are a leading public health risk in the Midwest.

More information on Midwest Clean Diesel Initiative and the MCDI Leadership Group is at www.epa.gov/midwestcleandiesel/.

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