



Press Release

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The Clean Energy Resource Teams and Project Green Fleet work together to clean up every school bus in the state

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Contacts:

Jordan Hansen
Environmental Project Associate
Project Green Fleet
jhansen@mn-ei.org
612-334-3388 x104

Patrick Santelli
Campaign Coordinator
Clean Energy Resource Teams
schoolscuttingcarbon@cleanenergyresourceteams.org
612-625-3759

Wednesday, May 19, 2010, Saint Paul, MN – Every day, Minnesota’s students spend over an hour on average riding a school bus. Buses are a common way for children to get to and from school, but air inside buses can be up to five times as polluted as the air outside. The Clean Energy Resource Teams (CERTs) are partnering with Project Green Fleet to improve the environmental standards of older buses. Project Green Fleet provides and installs air quality retrofit equipment, normally valued at \$1,500-2,000, at no cost to fleets or districts.

Diesel vehicles account for 10% of traffic on Minnesota roads, but account for more than 50% of all traffic-related air pollution. With a simple, free retrofit by Project Green Fleet, we can reduce emissions by 30-50% per vehicle.



The emission reductions directly benefit students and employees that ride and work around the buses. “Our company chose to participate in Project Green Fleet to take a proactive approach in helping reduce pollutants in the air we breathe for the safety of our children and employees,” said Jim Koonst, owner of Stier Transportation Services in Belle Plaine, MN. This strong leadership demonstrated by transportation managers, such as Koonst, coupled with proactive community action, has been key to the program’s success.

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Diesel exhaust contains a variety of pollutants, which contribute to the formation of ground level ozone, or smog. These pollutants harm human health, increasing the risk of heart and lung disease and can trigger upper respiratory problems, such as asthma. Children are especially vulnerable to these ailments as they breathe more air per pound than adults, and their bodies are still developing.

Over 1,700 buses across the state have participated in Project Green Fleet so far. Together, CERTs and Project Green Fleet have the goal of retrofitting every eligible bus in the state. The voluntary measure has been

successful due in part to the ease of installation. Some transportation directors were unsure of the process at the beginning. "I wanted to see that other districts had done this successfully before we retrofitted our buses. But I should not have worried. Everything went really smoothly for us—the installations were seamless," said Denny Coughlin of Minneapolis Public Schools.

Your school district can clean up its buses for free! Children will breathe easier and your local air quality will be improved, all with no impact on the performance of the buses. Learn more at and take action at <http://greenfleet.mncerts.org>.

High-resolution graphics and more quotations from Project Green Fleet participants available upon request.

Green Up Your Fleet! is the second in a series of "CERTified Campaigns" from the Clean Energy Resource Teams to provide Minnesotans with clear and actionable ways to implement energy efficiency and renewable energy projects in their community. To learn about other campaigns, visit <http://act.mncerts.org>.

The Clean Energy Resource Teams connect Minnesotans with resources to identify and implement energy efficiency and renewable energy projects. CERTs is made up of community members across Minnesota who share a bold vision for Minnesota's energy future: to foster strong communities, to create local jobs, and to develop clean and reliable energy from clean sources. CERTs is a partnership of the University of Minnesota's Regional Sustainable Development Partnerships, the Green Institute, Southwest Regional Development Commission, The Minnesota Project, and the Minnesota Department of Commerce, Office of Energy Security.

Project Green Fleet is a collaborative effort among businesses, government agencies, and non-profit organizations to improve air quality and protect public health by reducing emissions from Minnesota's school buses and other diesel vehicles. Project Green Fleet implements a range of strategies to reduce diesel emissions including installation of pollution control equipment, implementation of idle reduction technologies, and replacement of older engines with new cleaner running engines. All of these strategies are provided for little to no cost for participating fleets. Project Green Fleet is managed by the Minnesota Environmental Initiative, a Minneapolis-based nonprofit organization.

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