

What is Clean Air Zone Idaho?

Clean Air Zone Idaho is a statewide program aimed at reducing children's exposure to school bus diesel exhaust by discouraging idling of buses and other vehicles and encouraging use of alternative fuels in school buses.

President Bush and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) have requested \$65 million in funding for *Clean School Bus USA*, a national partnership to reduce emissions of air pollutants from school buses.

To assist Idaho schools in accessing federal funding and achieving national program goals, the Idaho Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) has initiated *Clean Air Zone Idaho* to provide Idaho schools with a comprehensive toolkit to reduce the impacts of vehicle emissions outside their schools.

The goals of *Clean Air Zone Idaho* are to:

- Provide a healthier environment for Idaho's school-children by reducing emissions from diesel-powered school buses;
- Improve air quality in and around school buildings and throughout local communities; and
- Assist school districts in obtaining funding to use cleaner fuels, replace existing buses with cleaner models, and/or retrofit buses with advanced emission control technologies.

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DEQ's Air Quality Educational Tools Web page:
www.deq.idaho.gov/air/educ_tools.htm

Idaho Department of Health and Welfare's Asthma Prevention and Control Program:
http://www.healthandwelfare.idaho.gov/portal/alias__Rainbow/lang__en-US/tabID__3395/DesktopDefault.aspx

U.S. EPA's Clean School Bus USA Program:
www.epa.gov/otaq/schoolbus/index.htm



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How your school
can help
improve air quality
and
protect children's health
by reducing
diesel and vehicle emissions

What are the health impacts of diesel exhaust?

Diesel exhaust aggravates asthma, emphysema, and bronchitis, according to the U.S. EPA, and exacerbates allergies. Based on human exposure studies as well as lab data, EPA has concluded that diesel is a probable carcinogen.

While dropping off or picking students up from school and waiting, idling buses and vehicles emit fine particulate matter and other air pollutants, which can impact air quality and public health. Bus idling and bus queuing can further increase the concentrations of particulates both inside school buses and inside nearby buildings.



Although breathing diesel exhaust may not measurably impair lung function in adults, recent studies demonstrate that particulate pollution can impair the development of lungs in children. Fortunately, schools can take several steps to reduce diesel exhaust from school buses.

What can schools do to minimize the health impacts of school bus diesel exhaust?

Reduce exposure.

- ✓ Establish guidelines to reduce or eliminate idling of buses and other vehicles.
- ✓ Park buses away from children's gathering places and building intake vents.
- ✓ Inform parents and other vehicle users of no-idling policies in front of schools, especially during periods when large numbers of children are present (pick-up and drop-off times).
- ✓ Create a Clean Air Zone around your school to comprehensively address children's exposure to air pollution.



Use alternative fuels.

Using cleaner fuels is one way existing buses can be upgraded (or "retrofitted") to pollute less. Possible alternative fuel options include:

Biodiesel Fuels:

Biodiesel, a mixture of diesel fuel with soybean or vegetable oil-based products, can reduce fine particulate emissions by up to 10%, and also may reduce the toxicity of diesel emissions.

A standard diesel engine can operate on biodiesel mixtures of up to 20% without physical modifications. The incremental cost of 20% biodiesel typically ranges from 12-20 cents per gallon.

Ultra-Low Sulfur Diesel:

ULSD has significantly less sulfur content, which results in up to 10% reductions of fine particulates, and can be used in any diesel vehicle. The additional cost of ULSD ranges from 8- 20 cents per gallon.

Cash in on bus retrofit and purchase programs.

Across the country, local school districts have purchased more than 2,600 clean alternative fuel buses over the past few years. With the increase in federal funding under the Clean School Bus Program, the opportunity has never been better for Idaho schools to participate in this nationwide program.

DEQ is committed to helping Idaho schools in finding and applying for funds to:

- retrofit buses with new technologies.
- replace old buses with new cleaner buses.
- repair and maintain existing buses to run safe and clean.

Join the Clean Air Zone Idaho Program.

Take a pledge to "get into the zone." Your school will receive:

- A **Clean Air Zone** Toolkit, including sample clean air zone strategies and guidelines for adopting no-idle zones outside your schools, signs to mark no-idle zones, sample letters to parents, and information for bus drivers.
- Technical and policy assistance.
- Information on funding opportunities.