



CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION'S CLEAN SCHOOL BUS PROGRAM

In January 2002, the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) in conjunction with several federal, state and local partners launched a pilot project in the City of Norwich as part of the Clean School Bus Program. The partners have worked together diligently to achieve the goal of reducing children's risk exposure from diesel school bus emissions, and to create a model that would be transferable to school districts throughout Connecticut.

The Clean School Bus pilot program in Norwich has combined a multi-faceted approach to reduce diesel school bus emissions through the use of low emission fuels and state-of-the-art pollution control devices. At the start of this school year, forty-two (42) diesel school buses in the Norwich school system started using ultra low sulfur diesel (ULSD) fuel. In addition, thirty-three (33) of the diesel school buses have been retrofitted with a diesel oxidation catalyst and nine (9) have been equipped with diesel particulate filters by the end of November. These emission control devices have been verified by the federal Environmental Protection Agency to capture and reduce emissions from diesel engines. It is anticipated that the combination of ULSD fuel and exhaust retrofits will result in significant tailpipe emission reductions from the school buses.

In the spring of 2003, measurements will be taken to estimate the emission reductions realized through this program. Testing of tail pipe emissions from the bus will be conducted in addition to sampling the air quality in the bus and around passenger loading areas.

Project Participants

Connecticut Department of Environmental
Protection (CT DEP)

Uncas Health District

Norwich Public Schools

First Student, Inc.

Northeast States for Coordinated Air Use
Management (NESCAUM)

Connecticut Department of Motor Vehicles
(CT DMV)

Connecticut Department of Public Health
(DPH)

Connecticut School Transportation
Association (COSTA)

A public outreach and education campaign on the new program is being developed for teachers, parents and students in the Norwich school system. Two film students from Norwich Free Academy have been retained to develop a documentary detailing all of the steps of the project. This documentary will be used to inform other cities and towns interested in implementing a similar project. One critical component involves the development of an air quality curriculum. The curriculum will be an insert to the science curriculum grades 6-8. This curriculum will be developed to meet the state framework and will serve as a model to other districts state-wide. This program will also serve as a model for other communities to follow to reduce pollution from the school buses.

The Uncas Health District will be assisting with this outreach and education, particularly as regards parents and general members of the Norwich community. It is expected that the cleaner air resulting from reduction of diesel fuel emissions from the frequent operation of school buses will benefit the students riding the buses as well as persons living and working in Norwich. Thus, the public's health will be improved by the Clean School Bus pilot program.

Funding for the pilot project was made available through a \$250,000 Supplemental Environmental Project (SEP) resulting from the settlement of an enforcement action against a Norwich metallurgical facility. SEP projects may serve in addition to monetary penalties as the basis for a consensual settlement of an enforcement case. Through the SEP, the DEP is paying the considerable costs for these mechanical improvements to the bus fleet and subsidizing the City of Norwich for the increased cost of purchasing the necessary low sulfur fuels for the 2002/03 school year.

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