



News Releases

News Releases from Region 09

U.S. EPA requires Halliburton to reduce air pollution near schools

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LOS ANGELES – Today, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency announced a settlement valued at more than \$400,000 with Halliburton Energy Services, Inc. for a fleet of diesel trucks that violated California’s Truck and Bus Regulation. The company will spend \$180,600 on environmental projects to reduce air pollution at schools in the Los Angeles area, and \$75,000 on air quality improvements in the San Joaquin Valley. It will also pay a \$154,400 civil penalty and has taken measures to comply with the law.

EPA made the announcement at Van Deene Avenue Elementary School near Torrance, Calif., joined by the California Air Resources Board, the South Coast Air Quality Management District and the Los Angeles Unified School District to highlight the air filtration systems being installed to protect students’ health.

Halliburton, headquartered in Houston, Tex., is one of the world’s largest providers of products and services to the energy industry. The company operated 61 heavy-duty diesel trucks in California from 2012 to 2014 without the required diesel particulate filters and failed to verify compliance with the Truck and Bus Regulation for its hired motor carriers. Fine particulate matter (soot) can be emitted directly from sources such as diesel engines.

"This ground-breaking settlement takes aim at a major source of road pollution in a state burdened with some of the worst air quality in the nation," said Alexis Strauss, EPA’s Acting Regional Administrator for the Pacific Southwest. "Transport companies must comply with California's rule to cut the pollutants that lead to higher asthma rates for children and more emergency room visits for heart and lung illnesses.

"This settlement clearly demonstrates that working together with the U.S. EPA provides expanded and enhanced enforcement of California’s Truck and Bus Regulation," said Todd Sax, head of CARB’s Enforcement Division. "All trucking companies operating in California must comply with this rule so that all of California, especially those in our hardest hit communities, can breathe clean air that meets federal air quality standards."

In addition to the filters at Van Deene Avenue Elementary School, Halliburton will pay to have similar systems installed at the 186th Street Elementary School and Riley High School in Gardena. The systems will reduce exposure to ultrafine particulate matter, black carbon, and fine particulate matter emitted from

trucks operating on highways near the school sites. The South Coast Air Quality Management District's contractor IQAir North America will verify the performance of the systems and training of school staff to ensure their proper operation. The project includes a five-year supply of replacement filters, which are expected to remove more than 90 percent of ultra-fine particulate matter and black carbon, based on independent testing. Schools near major freeways can increase exposure to air traffic pollution. Studies have shown that improved indoor air quality in classrooms increases productivity and improves attendance and performance in both adults and students.

"This school is less than one block from a major freeway," said Wayne Nastri, SCAQMD's Acting Executive Officer. "Studies have shown many adverse health effects are associated with exposure to vehicle emissions near busy roadways, especially diesel exhaust particulate emissions that are classified as a human carcinogen. In addition, children are more susceptible to air pollution. These classroom air filters will help protect students' health."

"On behalf of the students and faculty at Van Deene Avenue and 186th Street Elementary Schools and Riley High School, we are grateful that air filtration systems will be installed at our schools. The health and safety of students and staff remains our top priority," said Christopher Downing, L.A. Unified Superintendent, Local District South.

Halliburton will also provide \$75,000 to the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District in support of its Healthy Air Living Schools Program. The funds will enable schools to receive hourly, real-time data on poor air quality so that timely action can be taken to avoid student exposure to unhealthy outdoor air. The program will also raise awareness of the public health impacts from idling buses and automobiles near schools. Idling vehicles contribute to air pollution and emit air toxics that are known or suspected to cause cancer and other serious health effects.

In California, mobile sources of diesel emissions, such as trucks and construction equipment, are one of the largest sources of ultrafine particulate matter. About 625,000 trucks are registered outside of the state, but operate in California and are subject to the rule. Many of these vehicles are older models and emit particulate matter and nitrogen oxides (NOx).

The California Truck and Bus Regulation was adopted into federal Clean Air Act plan requirements in 2012 and applies to diesel trucks and buses operated in California. The rule requires trucking companies to upgrade vehicles they own to meet specific NOx and particulate matter performance standards and also requires trucking companies to verify compliance of vehicles they hire or dispatch. Heavy-duty diesel trucks in California must meet 2010 engine emissions levels or use diesel particulate filters, which can reduce the emissions of diesel particulate into the atmosphere by 85 percent or more.

Exposure to traffic-related air pollution has been linked to a variety of short-term and long-term health effects, including asthma, reduced lung function, impaired lung development in children, and cardiovascular effects in adults. Children's exposure to traffic-related air pollution while at school is a concern because many schools across the country are located near heavily traveled roadways and children are particularly vulnerable to air traffic pollution.

For more information on the Truck and Bus Rule, please visit:
<http://www.arb.ca.gov/msprog/onrdiesel/regulation.htm>

For more information on the Clean Air Act, please visit: <http://www.epa.gov/airprog/oar/caa/>