

# Alert

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*Alert is a monthly update on transportation and air quality planning activities in the Delaware Valley.*



## Air Quality Regulations

### Trump Administration Ends Talks with California Over Fuel Economy Standards

Federal officials reported they have ended discussions with California over the Trump administration's plan to roll back vehicle fuel economy standards with no agreement between the parties.

In August 2018, the Trump administration announced it would not only freeze new standards after 2020 but also eliminate California's waiver to set stricter fuel economy rules than the rest of the nation.

California has had the waiver since 1963, when congressional lawmakers granted the state such authority under the Clean Air Act, in recognition that California had already set more stringent pollution measures and that the fast-growing state faced more pressing environmental challenges than other parts of the nation. California went on to play an instrumental role in instituting unleaded gasoline, implementing catalytic converters, and tracking carbon dioxide emissions.

The administration's plan requires automakers to achieve a fleet-wide average fuel economy of 37 miles per gallon (mpg) for cars and light-duty trucks by 2025, replacing the Obama-era standard of 54.5 mpg. Under the Clean Air Act, other states can choose to follow California's stricter rules, and 19 states, including Pennsylvania and New Jersey, have joined California in the past year in calling on the administration to halt its effort to roll back fuel economy standards.

California officials already have filed suit to block the Trump administration proposal to roll back federal fuel economy targets for 2022-2025. It is not clear how the industry would respond to the formal adoption of Trump's proposed freeze, and likely litigation by California and other states.

Joe Hinrichs, of Ford Motor Co, said he was "disappointed" in reports the talks had fallen apart. "The auto industry needs regulatory certainty, not protracted litigation."

Trump's proposed freeze would result in 500,000 barrels per day more oil consumption by the 2030s. The administration says it would reduce regulatory costs for automakers by more than \$300 billion over the next decade.

The administration was supposed to finalize the new rules by the end of March in order for the revised requirements to take effect by the 2021 model year, but some automakers and officials have questioned if the administration will meet that deadline.

For more information on the administration's proposal to revise fuel economy standards, please visit: <https://www.usnews.com/news/politics/articles/2019-02-20> ,



## Save the Date

Thursday  
March 28, 2019 (Extended)  
Application Deadline for  
US EPA Diesel Emission  
Reduction Act grant

For information on the grant  
program, please visit:  
[https://www.epa.gov/grants/  
clean-diesel-funding-  
assistance-program-fy-2019](https://www.epa.gov/grants/clean-diesel-funding-assistance-program-fy-2019)

Friday  
May 10, 2019  
Application Deadline for  
PA DEP Class 8 Diesel Truck  
and Transit Bus Grant  
Program

For information on the grant  
program, please visit:  
[www.depgis.state.pa.us/  
DrivingPAForward](http://www.depgis.state.pa.us/DrivingPAForward)



## Air Quality News

### New Jersey DEP Announces Funding for \$11.2 Million in Projects Through the Volkswagen Mitigation Trust.

On February 28, 2019, New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJ DEP) Commissioner, Catherine McCabe, announced that New Jersey would be awarding \$11.2 million of New Jersey's share of the federal Volkswagen Mitigation Trust (Trust) settlement for hundreds of electric-vehicle charging outlets across the state and new electric NJ Transit buses in the City of Camden.

The projects are the first to be announced for funding from the Trust, from which New Jersey is receiving \$72.2 million. Governor Phil Murphy has committed to using 15 percent or \$10.8 million of the state's settlement amount for electric-vehicle charging stations. In addition to these projects, the DEP is evaluating more than \$400 million worth of other project applications and expects to announce additional awards before the summer.

One focus of the funds will be on environmental justice to communities which are disproportionately impacted by pollution and resulting health impacts. The new electric buses in the City of Camden will be a step toward electrifying public transportation in New Jersey.

"We are committed to growing charging infrastructure across New Jersey and making it easier for the public to help us improve air quality by using zero-emission vehicles," Commissioner McCabe said. "The new buses in Camden will be beneficial in helping to reduce harmful emissions that contribute to smog. Better air quality means better health for our communities and residents."

The DEP will use \$3.2 million to award grants for approximately 827 charging outlets at 533 charging stations under the It Pay\$ to Plug In - New Jersey's Electric Vehicle Charging Grant Program, more than doubling the number of non-residential charging outlets in the state.

New Jersey has 786 charging outlets at 322 public locations across the state. Grantees in this first round of funding include 55 municipalities and counties, public parking lots and garages, apartment and condominium complexes, car-share services, hotels, private companies, and nonprofit organizations. Charging stations also will be installed at select NJ Transit commuter rail stations and at rest stops along the Atlantic City Expressway.

An additional \$8 million was awarded to purchase eight new electric transit buses to be operated in the City of Camden.

"The DEP is excited to work with NJ Transit on this pilot project and looks forward to adding electric buses to the remainder of the fleet," said Paul Baldauf, Assistant Commissioner for Air Quality, Energy, and Sustainability. "Providing the residents of Camden and surrounding areas with access to clean transportation, in addition to adding more charging stations around the region, is a priority."

In reviewing additional funding applications, the DEP is focusing on reducing ozone pollution as well as greenhouse gas emissions, expanding the use of electric vehicles, and advancing environmental justice goals by using electric public transit buses, school buses, and other zero-emission vehicles in communities that disproportionately bear the burden of air pollution.

The Trust is the result of federal actions against the automaker for installing "defeat" devices that allowed vehicles it manufactured to emit pollutants without being detected by emissions-testing programs across the country. Two partial consent decrees approved in 2016 and 2017 established a \$2.93 billion environmental mitigation trust to provide funds to all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and federally recognized tribes to implement actions to counter the air quality impacts of excess nitrogen oxide emissions resulting from the emissions defeat devices.

For more information on New Jersey's plans to award projects under the Volkswagen Mitigation Trust, please visit: <https://www.state.nj.us/dep/vw/>.



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