

For Governors of: MS, TN, NC, SC, KY, FL

GA and AL have requested that we do not send this to their Governor at this time.

Dear Governor,

Reducing emissions from diesel engines is one of the most important public health and air quality challenges we face today. These challenges include reducing exposure to diesel exhaust in and around America's construction sites. There are approximately two million units of diesel powered construction equipment currently operating in the United States. Diesel emissions from construction equipment contribute significantly to local air pollution. For example, a 175 horsepower bulldozer emits as much particulate matter (PM) as 500 new automobiles. The good news is that there are a variety of cost-effective technologies that can dramatically reduce diesel emissions and help our nation meet its clean air goals. The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) estimates that for every one dollar invested in diesel emission reductions, it generates thirteen dollars in health benefits.

Because diesel emissions have such an important impact on public health and air quality, states such as **[insert name of state]** have taken an active leadership role in the Southeast Diesel Collaborative. This voluntary, public-private partnership involves leaders from federal, state and local government agencies, non-profit organizations and private industry across the southeast. The goal of the Collaborative is to improve air quality and public health by encouraging the use of clean, renewable energy and technology and by reducing diesel emissions from existing engines and equipment in the agriculture, heavy construction and on-road sectors.

To help reduce diesel emissions from the construction sector, the Southeast Diesel Collaborative developed a "Clean Construction Desk Statement" that focuses on four key principals of environmentally-friendly construction practices. I encourage you to adopt these principals into an Executive Order and consider incorporating these clean construction principals into all state construction contracts. Your state environmental and transportation agencies will brief your staff in the near future about this effort and will provide your office with the text of a draft Executive Order or Desk Statement and sample contract language that is customized for your state. Enclosed is a model desk statement that the Southeast Diesel Collaborative has developed to use as a guide.

State leadership on this issue is vital to its success. Some of the diesel strategies we are encouraging are simple practices, such as engine idle reduction and preventative maintenance, which also help companies save fuel and money. Others may require a relatively modest investment in proven technologies. In both cases, your state and citizens will benefit from reduced petroleum consumption and reduced diesel emissions that degrade overall air quality. Clean construction is a win-win situation for everyone.

EPA Region 4 is supporting this effort by adopting clean construction language into our Superfund cleanup grant contracts. We appreciate your desire to protect and preserve the environment and I encourage you to continue your leadership in reducing diesel emissions through a clean construction effort in your state. If we may be of further assistance, please feel free to contact me or have a member of your staff contact Beverly Banister of my staff at (404) 562-9326.

Sincerely,

J. I. Palmer, Jr.
Regional Administrator

Enclosure

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