

NEWS



Manufacturers of Emission Controls Association

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Advanced Catalyst Technology Will Play a Critical Role in Meeting EPA's Proposed Tough New Automobile and Light Truck Emission Standards

WASHINGTON, DC -- The U.S. EPA this week proposed stringent emission standards for passenger cars, mini-vans, sport-utility vehicles (SUVs), and pick-up trucks -- and advanced catalyst systems will be a key component in achieving the new emission limits. "Catalyst technology, which has helped eliminate billions of tons of pollution from motor vehicles in the U.S. and around the world over the past 25 years, continues to advance and will once again play a critical role in the further, significant emission reductions from the motor vehicles of tomorrow," stated Bruce Bertelsen, executive director of the Manufacturers of Emission Controls Association (MECA).

EPA's comprehensive proposed emission control initiative -- called the Tier 2 Program -- would require new passenger cars, mini-vans, SUVs, and pick-up trucks beginning in 2004 to cut smog-forming pollutants by 80% or more over the levels currently emitted by vehicles sold in the U.S. And for the first time, all new vehicles sold in U.S. that are used primarily as passenger vehicles -- be they a small compact car or a large SUV -- would be required to meet the same, stringent standards.

Recent advances in catalyst technology have included the development of catalyst formulations capable of withstanding extremely high temperatures, the engineering of active catalyst layers to maximize efficiency and durability, and the introduction of higher cell density and thin-walled catalyst supports to improve catalyst efficiency. Advanced catalyst technology will be coupled with advanced engine designs and fuel preparation/delivery technology into a complete emission control system. "EPA's proposal to reduce sulfur levels in gasoline will also play a critical role in meeting the tough new standards," Bertelsen noted.

The technological feasibility of meeting the proposed Tier 2 standards was recently illustrated by a comprehensive demonstration program sponsored by MECA. In the program, three 1997 model year vehicles (two passenger cars and one pick-up truck) and one 1999 model year pick-up truck designed to meet the current federal standards (the Tier 1 standards) were equipped with advanced catalyst systems. After the engine controls on each vehicle were modified to enhance catalyst performance and the catalytic control systems aged in accordance

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with accepted aging procedures, the vehicles were emission tested and the results showed that the emission levels were below EPA's proposed 120,000-mile Tier 2 standards. The advanced catalyst systems also significantly reduced toxic emissions (benzene, formaldehyde, acetaldehyde, and 1,3-butadiene) relative to the stock systems on the vehicles.

“The new standards that EPA has proposed will define the emission control performance of passenger cars, mini-vans, sport-utility vehicles, and pick-up trucks for the next 10 to 15 years and will impact air quality well into the next century,” Bertelsen commented. “The proposed standards present technical challenges, but we believe with the lead time available, these challenges can and will be met.”

For a copy of the report, *MECA Demonstration Program of Advanced Emission Control Systems for Light-Duty Vehicles (May 1999)*, contact MECA's Dale McKinnon at 202.296.4797 or download it from MECA's web site at www.meca.org.

MECA, founded in 1976, is the association of the world's leading companies that manufacture emission control equipment for automobiles, trucks, buses, off-road vehicles, and select stationary sources.

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