

NEWS



Manufacturers of Emission Controls Association

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MECA Voices Support for Finalizing U.S. EPA's Heavy-Duty Engine Standards/Diesel Fuel Sulfur Limits

Washington, DC – The Manufacturers of Emission Controls Association (MECA), the association of the world's leading manufacturers of motor vehicle emission control technology, today voiced strong support for finalizing by the end of the year EPA's proposed on-road heavy-duty engine and vehicle 2007 and later model year emission standards and the proposed diesel fuel sulfur limits.

“We believe an important opportunity exists to significantly further reduce emissions from highway heavy-duty diesel engines by utilizing an engineered systems approach that incorporates and combines advanced engine designs, advanced emission control technology, and very low sulfur diesel fuel. EPA's regulatory initiative recognizes the importance of promoting this systems-type approach and the Agency's proposal constitutes a carefully crafted and balanced program,” stated MECA's Executive Director, Bruce Bertelsen. “If the program is finalized, it will result in substantial, cost-effective emission reductions over the next several decades. Indeed, EPA's initiative will bring about the era of the truly clean diesel engine.”

Over the past several years, MECA companies have spent several hundred million dollars on developing, optimizing, and commercializing advanced emission control technologies to help enable motor vehicles to meet increasingly more stringent emission control regulatory requirements. If EPA's proposed highway heavy-duty engine and vehicle/diesel fuel sulfur control program is finalized, these companies are committed to make the necessary investments to insure that the emission control technology needed is available.

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Some parties have suggested delaying a decision on EPA's proposal. Aside from the resulting delay in significantly reducing the health impacts of diesel exhaust emissions – a growing public concern, MECA believes such a delay is unnecessary and would substantially jeopardize the prospects of reaching the goal of the truly clean diesel engine. If the EPA delays this important regulatory initiative, the substantial commitment in financial and human resources that is being made by MECA member companies and many others to develop and/or optimize the necessary technology solutions likely will be scaled back. It is uncertain at best whether the level of commitment that has been made will be resurrected at a later date. Any delay will jeopardize meeting the 2007 deadline for the emission standards.

Further, suggestions that EPA should wait until the necessary technological solutions are commercially available is totally unrealistic. Virtually no investment in technology development will occur based on the vague prospect that if technology is developed, regulations may be adopted. Such logic flies in the face of the 30-year success story of the Clean Air Act. Under the Clean Air Act, both Congress and EPA have established standards based on technology that will be available in the future. These standards have created the regulatory incentives to develop the needed technology to meet those standards. With adequate lead-time provided, the challenge of meeting stringent standards has been successfully met time and time again. The situation is no different with EPA's current proposal. Indeed, unlike some past situations, clear technology pathways are defined for meeting the future standards proposed by EPA.

MECA believes the emission standards proposed for highway diesel-powered heavy-duty engines can be achieved in a cost-effective manner within the lead-time provided, if very low sulfur diesel fuel is available. Emission control manufacturers believe high-performance, cost-effective, and durable emission control technologies will be available as part of the complete engineered system necessary to meet EPA's proposed emission standards.

EPA, in its proposal, identified two candidate technologies for meeting the proposed emission limits: catalyst-based diesel particulate filters (CB-DPF) for particulate (PM) control and NOx adsorber technology for oxides of nitrogen (NOx) control. "Catalyst-based diesel particulate filters are commercially available today; the only remaining engineering effort is to optimize the filter systems for the specific engine to which they will be applied. Development and optimization of NOx adsorber technology is progressing at a rapid rate and our members fully expect that with the availability of very low sulfur fuel, this technology will be commercialized in the 2007 timeframe for diesel engines," concluded Bertelsen.

Founded in 1976, MECA is a national association of companies that manufacture a variety of mobile source emission control equipment for automobiles, trucks, buses, and off-road vehicles and engines, as well as catalytic controls for select stationary sources. For more information on exhaust emission control technology, please visit MECA's web site at www.meca.org.

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