

The Facts on Diesel . . .



- Studies in California reveal that **more than 70% of the risk of cancer from air pollution comes from diesel exhaust.**
- Diesel engines **emit more than 75%** of the fine particles (less than 2.5 microns in diameter) from all vehicles. (U.S. EPA).
- Particulate pollution in school buses is **5 to 15 times higher** than at nearby monitoring sites. Bus idling, bus queuing and closed windows **increased** the concentrations of particulates inside school buses. (Wargo Study, Yale Univ.)
- Fine particle pollution (otherwise known as soot) from exhaust significantly **increases the risk of death from heart and lung disease, causing at least 70,000 deaths a year in the U.S.** (MPCA)
- According to the U.S. EPA, diesel exhaust **aggravates asthma, emphysema, and bronchitis.** Diesel exhaust exacerbates allergies.
- In Minnesota, **asthma is the leading cause of absenteeism in school children.** Hospitalizations for asthma in Minnesota citizens under the age of 20 is **increasing.** (MN DOH)
- Federal regulators have estimated that diesel exhaust is **responsible for as many as 125,000 cancers nationwide.** (ALAPCO)

Join the Campaign To Reduce School Bus Diesel Emissions

Together students, schools, parents, bus drivers, all levels of government, and other concerned citizens are making a commitment to improve the quality of health for Minnesota's students. Show your support for this statewide effort, and join the campaign today to reduce diesel emissions from school buses.



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CLUB**
FOUNDED 1892

For more information on the Cleaner Bus School campaign:

Michelle Rosier, Air Toxics Organizer: 612-379-3853
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Paula Maccabee, Program Coordinator: 651-646-8890
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or visit our website:

www.northstar.sierraclub.org/studentzone.htm

HOW YOUR SCHOOL CAN PROTECT CHILDREN'S HEALTH



FROM HARMFUL SCHOOL BUS DIESEL EMISSIONS

In May 2002, the state of Minnesota passed a law minimizing the exposure of children to diesel exhaust fumes from school buses.

The law also requires schools to redesign parking away from school's air intake valves by July 2003.



In May 2002, the Minnesota State Legislature passed legislation calling for schools statewide to minimize children's exposure to school bus diesel fumes.

Prior to the legislation, according to a national report issued by the Union of Concerned Scientists, Minnesota rated "**behind the curve**" at a "**C- to D+**" for the level of pollution from our school bus fleets.

National studies have shown diesel fumes increase the risk of heart and lung disease, asthma, and cancer. Bus idling, bus queuing, and closed windows increased the concentration of pollution in the bus 5 to 15 times higher than nearby monitoring sites. With this information, the state of Minnesota took action to protect children's health.

School Bus Diesel Legislation

2.26 Sec. 2. [123B.885] [DIESEL SCHOOL BUSES; OPERATION OF
2.27 ENGINE; PARKING.]

2.28 Subdivision 1. [OPERATION OF ENGINE.] All operators of diesel school buses must minimize, to the extent practical, the idling of school bus engines and exposure of children to diesel exhaust fumes.

2.32 Subd. 2. [PARKING.] On and after July 1, 2003, diesel school buses must be parked and loaded at sufficient distance from school air-intake systems to avoid diesel fumes from being drawn into the systems, unless, in the judgment of the school board, alternative locations block traffic, impair student safety, or are not cost effective.

What Your School Can Do



NO IDLING POLICY

Require that buses turn off their engines when waiting for students in front of the school. Schedule buses to arrive closer to the time of pick up to reduce time idling when the bus must idle (e.g. during inclement weather). Your school can go a step further and implement a no vehicle idling policy for cars, delivery trucks, and buses.



INCREASE INSPECTION AND MAINTENANCE

Ask your mechanics or bus company to inspect and maintain buses for both physical and health safety of students.



REDESIGN PARKING

Relocate buses away from schools' air intake vents. Redesign parking at a diagonal, so buses are not lined up back to front to reduce diesel exhaust entering the bus.



MOVE AIR INTAKE VENTS

Redesign air intake vents away from parking lots and areas where buses or cars may idle to reduce the amount of exhaust pollution circulating in the school.



INVEST IN CLEANER BUS TECHNOLOGIES

Current buses can be equipped with filters and other technologies to reduce pollution emitted. As the school invests in new buses, purchase cleaner buses.



PROVIDE NOTICE TO PARENTS

Send an annual notice to parents, alerting them to the health risk their children are exposed to when exposed to diesel exhaust. In the notice, include what the school is doing to reduce children's exposure.



Model letters, notices, and policies

Resources are available to assist in drafting a school policy, a letter to administration, no idling posters or signs, or a notice to parents regarding implementation of a no idling policy. For more information on schools' efforts statewide, visit: www.northstar.sierraclub.org/studentzone.htm



Funding Opportunities

Federal and state funding options exist for schools to invest in cleaner bus technologies, transportation design, or comprehensive studies on a school's air quality. The Sierra Club has compiled a report of potential funding sources for schools. For more information about grant availability or to obtain a copy of the report, contact Michelle Rosier, Sierra Club 612-379-3853.



Student Speakers' Bureau

Invite a student leader to your school, organization, or classroom to discuss the school bus diesel campaign, and ways students can get involved in activism and their communities to make a difference. To schedule a presentation, contact Michelle Rosier, Sierra Club 612-379-3853



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