City of Oxnard fined $12,375 for air emissions violations

Money will fund air quality research, education and loan guarantees.

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SACRAMENTO — The Air Resources Board fined the City of Oxnard this month $12,375 for diesel emissions violations that occurred in 2006 and 2007.

An ARB investigator found that the city had not been annually inspecting its heavy-duty on-road diesel vehicles. Failing to conduct these inspections can lead to an increase of toxic diesel particulate matter in the air.

"Regular inspections guarantee that fleet owners are doing their part to help clean up California’s air," said ARB Chairman Mary Nichols. “Those that are not performing these tasks will be cited in our continuing effort to improve air quality.”

As part of the settlement, the city is required to:

• Guarantee employees responsible for conducting the inspections attend a training class on diesel emissions compliance testing and provide certificates of completion within one year;

• Provide documentation to ARB that the inspections are being carried out for the next four years;

• Ensure all of the city's heavy-duty diesel vehicles have their software updated with the latest Low-NOx (oxides of nitrogen emissions) programming;

• Comply with ARB’s Public and Utility Fleet rule that requires the use of exhaust retrofit devices, or replacement with new
vehicles or engines, to meet emissions standards;

- Make sure all of its heavy-duty diesel vehicles were certified to federal emissions standards for the vehicle model year and are properly labeled with an emissions control label; and,
- Instruct all of its drivers to comply with ARB’s five-minute idling rule.

The City of Oxnard will pay $12,375 in penalties: $9,281.25 will go to the California Air Pollution Control Fund, providing funding for projects and research to improve California’s air quality. The Peralta Community College District will receive $1,546.87 to fund diesel emissions education classes conducted by participating California community colleges, and the remaining $1,546.88, will go to the California Pollution Control Financing Authority to fund low-interest loans for owners of off-road diesel-powered construction vehicles.

Diesel exhaust contains a variety of harmful gases and over 40 known cancer-causing substances. In 1998, California identified diesel exhaust as a toxic air contaminant based on its potential to cause cancer, premature death and other health problems. People exposed to higher levels of emissions from diesel-fueled engines are at increases risk for cancer.

The Air Resources Board is a department of the California Environmental Protection Agency. ARB’s mission is to promote and protect public health, welfare, and ecological resources through effective reduction of air pollutants while recognizing and considering effects on the economy. The ARB oversees all air pollution control efforts in California to attain and maintain health based air quality standards.

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