



State of Ohio Environmental Protection Agency

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Letters to the Editor
Akron Beacon Journal

Dear Editor:

Your May 5 article, "Children Breathing Pollutants on Buses," pointed out the need for additional funding to clean up diesel emissions from school buses. Recognizing this need, in 2006 Ohio EPA developed a grant program using money collected from civil penalties arising from environmental violations.

Using these funds, nearly 400 aging school buses in Ohio were retrofitted with pollution control equipment in the last year. Ohio EPA awarded \$1,105,624 in 21 Ohio school districts, including 11 in Northeast Ohio. These grants have eliminated more than five tons of air pollution, including carbon monoxide, hydrocarbons and particulates. The retrofits will reduce pollution released in school bus diesel exhaust by an estimated 20 to 90 percent. Ohio EPA also encourages Ohio school districts to implement anti-idling policies for buses, by giving them priority for grant funding.

The next Ohio EPA grant application deadline for school bus retrofitting is September 1, 2007. Last week, U.S. EPA also announced the availability of additional federal grants for school bus retrofits, with a June 22 application deadline. Schools need to take advantage of these funding opportunities because children are more susceptible to air pollution exposure than adults.

For more information on school bus retrofitting grants, I encourage school districts and communities to contact Ohio EPA's Office of Environmental Education at (614) 644-2873.

Sincerely,

Chris Korleski
Director

Ted Strickland, Governor
Lee Fisher, Lieutenant Governor
Chris Korleski, Director