

Dirty Diesel Campaign Update

The US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has labeled diesel a “chronic respiratory hazard to humans.” Through an exemption to the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990, the diesel burned in Alaska has six times the sulfur than diesel in other parts of North America, and will continue to have these elevated pollution levels until 2007.

AkPIRG continues its effort to bring cleaner diesel fuel to Alaska. After pressure from AkPIRG and other groups, the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (ADEC) has agreed to follow the Clean Air Act for urban Alaska, which means that ultra-low sulfur fuel will come to Alaska in 2007. Until then, Alaska will still be using diesel that is six times dirtier than the rest of the nation and Canada. It also means that 95% of Alaska, all off-road uses, will still be exempt from the Clean Air Act unless the ADEC elects to include the bush in these health protections.

AkPIRG is bringing public health concerns to the fore by advocating for cleaner diesel fuel in Alaska **NOW**. Children, the elderly and those with breathing ailments like asthma are the most susceptible to the particulate pollution that comes from diesel exhaust. Alaska’s dirty diesel increases the danger. The Environmental Protection Agency just released a report entitled: *Health Assessment Document For Diesel Exhaust* in which it concludes that diesel “likely to be carcinogenic to humans by inhalation, and that this hazard applies to environmental exposure.” To make matters worse, Alaska diesel will stay six times dirtier than the rest of the country unless citizens pull together enough consumers to create a market for cleaner diesel.

What is AkPIRG doing?

- Alerting parents of school children and working with the Superintendent and the School Board in order to get cleaner diesel fuel and particulate traps in Alaska NOW!!! We don’t want to wait for 2007.
- Sparkplugging the formation of buying blocks of responsible consumers that don’t want their employees or customers exposed to Dirty Diesel exhaust. These include school buses, tour buses, the state fleet, dock workers and the railroad. AkPIRG is using market forces instead of legal change to spark this result.
- Pressing the ADEC to include village Alaska under the protections of the Clean Air Act in order to provide basic health protections to all Alaska.
- Educating the public about Dirty Diesel at such events as the Alaska Health Summit and Governor’s Safety and Health Conference.

HERE’S WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP

Link to: help.diesel