



**Environment
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New Law to Tackle Diesel Pollution in RI

The RI Department of Environmental Management issues health advisories when ozone smog levels in Rhode Island are expected to reach harmful levels. The second one of the year has been issued for Tuesday, June 26. Diesel pollution is a contributor to high ozone levels, as well as high levels of very small particles.

Fortunately, Rhode Islanders may be able to breathe a little easier in the future. A bill that calls for cleaning up some full-sized diesel school buses was passed early Saturday morning by the Legislature. The bill was sponsored by Representative Ginaitt and Senator Moura.

The Diesel Pollution Initiative, a coalition of 38 health, business, labor and environmental organizations supported the legislation. "The General Assembly has taken a bold step in protecting Rhode Island's children. This legislation is a first step in tackling one of the most polluting diesel fleets" said Denise Parrillo, of Clean Water Action and the Diesel Pollution Initiative.

New diesel vehicles are required to be cleaner, but older dirtier diesels could be on the road for decades. Diesel pollution poses serious health risks such as asthma, other lung ailments, strokes and heart attack. Providence County ranks among the worst 6% of all counties in the US for health impacts from diesel pollution. Children are particularly at risk. RI has the 5th highest rate of asthma in children in the US.

"More than one in ten Rhode Islanders have asthma," said Molly Clark of the American Lung Association of Rhode Island and the diesel Pollution Initiative.

"This legislation positions RI to look ahead to cleaning up other diesel fleets, such as garbage trucks and diesel vehicles used by the state," said Sam Krasnow, Attorney for Environment Northeast and the Diesel Pollution Initiative.

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