

Questions and Answers about the 2011 Diesel Emissions Reduction Grant Program

This list will be updated as additional questions are received.

For more information about the BEEP program contact Mindy Kralicek, air quality information specialist, at (515) 281-7832 or Mindy.Kralicek@dnr.iowa.gov

Question: Are private school districts eligible for the BEEP grant?

Answer: Yes.

Question: How many copies of the application need to be submitted for the BEEP grant?

Answer: We only need one copy submitted to SAI with an original signature.

Question: I'm not familiar with a closed crankcase ventilation system (CCVS). What work is required to install one?

Answer: The CCV is designed to capture and filter diesel engine crankcase emissions and redirect those emissions into the combustion process. Most CCV devices have a filter located between the crankcase vent and the engine air intake system to allow for the removal of impurities and any engine oil that may be in the crankcase fumes. The residual liquids are typically returned to the oil pan or a collection device. Some regular maintenance of the system is required to ensure optimal operation of the device. An example of maintenance includes routine replacement of the filter or disposal of the collected engine oil.

To select CCVs for your school buses, you will want to follow your supplier's recommendations for your particular school buses and the CCV model must be on the EPA's verified list of retrofits at www.epa.gov/oms/retrofit/verif-list.htm or the California Air Resources Board's (CARB) verified list at www.arb.ca.gov/diesel/verdev/vt/cvt.htm. The CCV must also be from the same manufacturer as the diesel oxidation catalyst on the school bus.

Some criteria for determining the compatible CCVS device for a school bus may include engine brake horsepower, blow-by volume, or available space within the engine compartment. You may want to consider the costs associated with the required maintenance needs, as these costs are not reimbursable. You may also want to consider the availability of replacement filters.

Once a CCV device is chosen for each school bus, ask for a cost estimate from an authorized installer of each selected CCV for each school bus. Please note that more than one authorized installer may need to be used, depending on each bus's requirements. There may be situations where it is not technically feasible to install a CCVS device.

The following manufacturer's web sites have additional information on their CCV products. The Iowa DNR and EPA do not recommend one product over another. That decision is your school district's.

<http://www.donaldson.com/en/exhaust/shoptalk/043187.pdf> is a brochure on Spiracle Crankcase Filtration Systems.

<http://enginecontrolsystems.com/prod-cvv.aspx> is a FACT sheet on ECS Closed Crankcase ventilation systems.

http://www.fleetguard.com/pdfs/product_lit/americas_brochures/LT32668.pdf is an installation brochure for the Cummins CCV.

Installation time is estimated at 1.5 to 5 hours, depending on the CCV and bus involved.

Question: My supplier suggested the retrofits could be sent directly to the school district's bus garage for installation. Who pays the freight in that situation?

Answer: Your school district will be reimbursed for freight if the cost of freight is included in the cost of retrofits submitted in the 2011 BEEP grant application. Do not order the retrofits before you know whether your school district is selected for a grant award.

Question: Our school district has a 1994 bus and we are wondering about the "pre-1994 engine." Does this bus qualify or does it have to be 1993 or older?

Answer: Sometimes a bus's chassis is one year newer than the engine year. For example, a bus built in 1994 might have a 1993 engine in it. We are interested in the engine year for the purposes of this grant award.

Question: My school district has two buses that are eligible for the replacement bus grant. Can we apply for two replacement buses?

Answer: No, school districts are eligible for only one school bus replacement match. Your other older bus is eligible for the reimbursement grant of the purchase price and installation cost of a diesel oxidation catalyst and closed crankcase ventilation system as part of your fleet emissions reduction application.

Question: If my school district was awarded a school bus replacement match and the retrofits for the grant that ended September 30, 2011, are we eligible for this grant offering?

Answer: No. Your school district's fleet has been retrofitted. The bus replacement match is the enticement to school districts to retrofit their school bus fleets with diesel emissions reduction DOCs and CCVS. We are limited in the dollar amount that can be used for school bus replacement matches, so we are offering those grants competitively and the awarded school districts are required to retrofit their school fleets as part of the grant.

If a school district which participated in the grant that ended September 30, 2011, has acquired an eligible bus that has not been retrofitted with either a DOC or CCV, the school district is encouraged to apply to have that bus retrofitted during this current application period (through December 6, 2011). Mark the application for Option 2, retrofits only.

Question: Is the installation of the CCVs and DOCs included in the reimbursement, or is that for the cost of the equipment only?

Answer: The awarded school district will be reimbursed for both the cost of installation and the price of the equipment. Receipts with a description of the equipment and the installation services are required for reimbursement. If the school district has its own mechanic install the equipment, the school district may submit an invoice for the hourly rate of the employee and multiply that by the time to install.

Page 7 of the application requires an estimate of the costs for both installation and equipment. Awarded school districts will be offered a contract that will include a limit on the reimbursement costs to approximately 10 percent over the estimated figures on the application page. Please be sure these are reasonably accurate.

Question: Can you apply for a new bus even if you don't have many buses to retrofit?

Answer: Yes you may. Be sure to check the appropriate box for question seven on the application.

Question: How many awards will you give out?

Answer: Currently we plan to award five school districts with replacement school bus matching funds along with retrofits for other eligible buses in each awardee's fleet. We will also award the highest ranking applicant scores the retrofit reimbursement funding until funds are depleted.

Question: How many applications do you usually get?

Answer: Last year we received 22 applications, six were disqualified due to lack of submitted information necessary to judge the applications, and seven school districts were awarded replacement bus matching funds with additional retrofits. Be sure to get all your questions answered before the application due date of Dec. 6, 2011.

Question: Why was the addendum added to the application booklet concerning eligible buses for replacement?

Answer: There have been remarks made to BEEP program members that some school districts view this grant opportunity as a source of revenue to help their budget problems. We sympathize with school districts that are experiencing this problem, but the BEEP program has always been about promoting the reduction of diesel emissions in the vicinity of school children and teaching them about the pollution emitted by vehicles as a health concern.

The purpose behind replacing a school bus with a pre-1994 engine is to get rid of school buses in use that are producing the most emissions with much cleaner buses — ones that produces 95 percent fewer emissions.

Diesel engines are rugged engines that last a long time, and unless there is an incentive to replace the dirtiest ones, most operators will keep using them as long as they operate cost effectively. Those engines continue to emit vast amounts of diesel emissions containing 40 toxic

substances. When those engines spew toxic emissions right next to school children waiting to board or are exiting the bus, and even collecting where they sit in the bus cabin, this is a health risk linked to increased frequency and severity of asthma attacks.

This grant program is to help school districts clean up their school bus fleets. It's not to be used to get money for a bus already put out of service or used minimally.

School transportation directors usually put the newest buses on the longest routes to reduce the amount of pollution that is emitted into the air, and that is very desirable from our point of view. The oldest buses may be used on shorter routes or serve as school activity buses and for backup when another bus is being serviced. The older buses used on short routes and for activities and backup are eligible for the replacement match grant, if they are used regularly.

Old buses that are driven less than 1,000 miles a year are not eligible buses.

Eligible school buses with the highest mileage on the pre-1994 engine and that are driven the most miles during the 2010 – 2011 school year will score higher points on the application.