



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Innovative Truck Program Steers Houston Toward Cleaner Air

EPA SmartWaySM Funding provides incentives for truckers operating at the Port of Houston to receive much-needed engine retrofits, upgrades

(HOUSTON) – In a major move to help improve regional air quality, Environmental Protection Agency Assistant Administrator Gina McCarthy today announced a \$9 million American Recovery and Reinvestment Act SmartWaySM Diesel Emissions Reduction Act (DERA) award to the Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC).

Environmental Defense Fund (EDF), with the Port of Houston Authority (PHA) and H-GAC, in conjunction with air quality consultants Emisstar LLC, partnered on the grant application for SmartWaySM program funds to tackle one of the largest and most difficult-to-address sources of pollution at any port: drayage trucks.

“This collaborative effort represents exactly the type of other partnerships needed to address the serious air quality issues in our region,” said Dr. Elena Craft, an air quality specialist with EDF, which pioneered the effort. “When business, civic, and environmental communities come together to address seemingly insurmountable issues, great progress can be made,” she said.

Drayage trucks are diesel-fueled, heavy-duty trucks that transport shipping containers. The DERA award will fund a bridge loan program that provides resources for retrofits or for newer, less-polluting trucks. The program targets owners of the more than 3,000 trucks operating at the Port of Houston, where most truckers are self-employed, owner-operators, or employees of one of the more than 150 private companies that are Port of Houston terminal operators. DERA funding will be combined with local funding sources leveraged from the state and the port to support cleaner vehicles.

Over the life of the program, the following emission reductions are anticipated: 1,638 tons of nitrous oxide; 26.7 tons of particulate matter; 27.4 tons of volatile organic compounds; 239 tons of carbon monoxide; and 3,636 tons carbon dioxide.

Representing a unique partnership across a diversity of sectors, the bridge loan program represents a breakthrough in reducing truck emissions one of our most challenging areas.

“The commitment and broad-based support of local leaders illustrates that the quality of the air we breathe is everyone’s responsibility,” said Alan Clark, H-GAC Director of Transportation Planning.

“The Port of Houston Authority is pleased to continue its support of programs that help in the reduction of air emissions,” said PHA Chairman James T. Edmonds. “The Clean Truck program is just one part of an important series of strategies in the Port of Houston Authority’s Clean Air Strategy Plan, an environmental stewardship program designed to help improve air quality in our region.”

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