



NEWS

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Bay Area Air District Funds The First Plug-in Hybrid School Bus in CA

San Francisco, Calif. –Napa schoolchildren will be able to breathe a little easier when they return to school in a few weeks. Students will be able ride to class in a brand new plug-in electric hybrid school bus, the first in California.

Partially sponsored by a \$100,000 contribution from the Bay Area Air Quality Management District, this “next generation” school bus reduces the amount of diesel emissions up to 90 percent, and lowers the amount of greenhouse gases being released into the atmosphere.

“Air pollution from old diesel school buses is a serious health concern that affects all Bay Area school children,” said Jack Broadbent, Executive Officer of the Bay Area Air District. “Napa’s plug-in hybrid school bus not only cleans up the air; it also offers a daily lesson in environmental stewardship for our youth”.

A plug-in hybrid is powered by a combination of electricity and liquid fuels. In addition to getting charged by the engine and captured braking energy, a plug-in also connects into the electrical grid to top off additional battery power. This combination creates much greater engine efficiency; which reduces the amount of diesel emissions and greenhouse gases being released into the air.

Air pollution is a serious public health concern affecting millions of residents on a daily basis, but experts say children are particularly vulnerable. Soot particles can disrupt development of their respiratory systems. Also, children breathe more quickly than adults and take in more air per pound of body weight.

Large diesel engines which power most of our fleet trucks and transportation buses create harmful microscopic particles that can become trapped in one’s lungs, causing respiratory problems, aggravating asthma, and leading to serious health issues, such as lung cancer.

Over the last seven years, the Air District has sponsored a number of innovative programs focused on protecting the health of school-age children. The District’s Lower-Emission School Bus Program seeks to reduce exposure to cancer-causing air pollution. The program has provided over 2.6 million dollars to school districts to fund newer, safer school buses, and to install air pollution control equipment (i.e., retrofit devices) on buses that are already on the road.

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