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Finished with off-road equipment, CARB now tackling on-road diesel engines

By **ERIK PISOR**, The Daily Transcript
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On July 26, equipment intensive contractors in California were hit with new off-road diesel equipment emissions regulations.

Now, many of those same contractors will have to comply with additional emissions regulations in the coming years, because the California Air Resources Board (CARB) is in the process of crafting on-road, heavy-duty diesel equipment emissions standards.

A draft of the proposed regulation was recently posted on CARB's Web site and discussion workshops were held this past week in El Monte and Sacramento, providing an opportunity for contractors and other parties affected by these regulations to express their concerns to CARB staff. An additional workshop is scheduled on Tuesday in Fresno.

The new on road regulations will apply to concrete mixers, dump trucks, crane trucks, tow/hauling trucks and bucket/boom trucks that exceed the 14,000 gross vehicle weight rating, according to a presentation given at the workshops.

Most of the proposed regulation is a clone of the adopted off-road rule, requiring diesel equipment owners to meet emission targets for oxides of nitrogen (NOx) and particulate matter (PM) emissions through either fleet averaging or best available control technology (BACT) approaches.

For construction companies involved in asphalt, cement, concrete, grading and excavation, the effects stemming from compliance with on road regulations will be much larger than those resulting from compliance with the recently adopted on-road standards, according to Mike Lewis, executive vice president of the Construction Industry Air Quality Coalition (CIAQC).

"It's (the adoption of on road regulations) going to be huge because some contractors have a much bigger on-road equipment supply," Lewis said, adding some contractors have five pieces of on-road equipment for every one piece of off-road equipment.

A good amount of that on-road equipment supply represents hauling trucks that take off-road equipment and supplies to construction sites.

To put things in perspective, Lewis said there are around 180,000 pieces of off-road equipment statewide and at least 1.5 million on-road diesel trucks that would have to comply with the proposed regulations.

Included in the 1.5 million figure are diesel trucks that haul consumer goods, passenger buses and fuel tank trucks, meaning this regulation reaches far beyond the construction industry.

"When it's going to affect beer deliveries you know there's going to be a problem," Lewis remarked, adding there will be a broad coalition of associations that will oppose the language contained within these proposed regulations including the California Trucking Association.

Despite this broad coalition Lewis said it is unlikely that CARB and its staff will listen to concerns from various industries or alter the language within the regulations, as comments from contractors during the off-road regulation workshops did little to affect the adopted language.

According to the proposed on road language, contractors and other affected parties must comply with emissions regulations through fleet averaging or BACT approaches.

If a fleet owner chooses the averaging route, that person must demonstrate that on Dec. 31 of each year, starting in 2009 and ending on Dec. 31, 2018, the NOx Index of the applicable portion of the fleet was less than or equal to the calculated NOx target rate.

Additionally, a fleet owner must demonstrate that on December 31 of each year the PM Index of the applicable portion of the fleet was less than or equal to the calculated PM Target Rate.

The BACT approach requires the NOx exhaust emissions from a vehicle to be less than or equal to the NOx emissions from an engine certified to the NOx emission standard for a 2004 model-year heavy-duty diesel engine.

It also requires that the PM exhaust emissions from a vehicle must be less than or equal to the PM emissions from an engine certified to the 0.1 g/bhp-hr PM emission standard for a 2004 model-year heavy-duty diesel engine.

Compliance dates would begin on December 31, 2009 and end in 2019.

By Dec. 31, 2019 all vehicles must meet engine model-year 2007 PM and NOx standards.

Exemptions will be given to low-use vehicles with fewer than 1,000 miles and less than 100 hours of operation during previous 12-month period; vehicles used for emergency operations; tactical military vehicles; hybrid vehicles; and any vehicle with a 2007 or newer engine and diesel particulate filter.

Fleet owners can comply with NOx and PM targets by applying a verified diesel emission control strategy to an engine, repowering engines, and retiring old vehicles and replacing them with new or cleaner used equipment.

Compliance extensions will be given to equipment owners if manufacturer delays occur.

CARB will consider adoption of the proposed on road regulations in mid-2008.

Currently there are CARB adopted emissions regulations for solid waste collection vehicles, public agency fleets and transit agency fleets.

Emissions regulations are also in development for heavy-duty drayage trucks.

For more information, including a copy of the draft regulation, go to:
<http://www.arb.ca.gov/msprog/onrdiesel/workshops.htm>.