

**NEWS RELEASE**  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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### **Local organizations urged to take advantage of diesel grant**

**(Lawrence, KS)** – One of Douglas County’s top health challenges – poor air quality – can be addressed with grant funding currently available to reduce diesel emissions. However, businesses need to act quickly to be eligible.

The deadline to apply for the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act- Kansas Diesel Grant Program is June 30. Organizations that operate public and private diesel fleets based in Kansas are eligible for the \$1.73 million program. Funding can assist with clean diesel projects such as engine idling and retrofit technologies, engine and vehicle replacement.

Air quality was one of Douglas County’s top health challenges mentioned in a recently released report by the Kansas Health Institute.

The funding also comes at a time when Douglas County risks being named an area of non-attainment by the EPA. Non-attainment means that an area does not meet minimum air-quality standards regarding its ozone levels. Five counties in the Kansas City region – Wyandotte and Johnson counties in Kansas and Platte, Clay, and Jackson counties in Missouri – are currently not in compliance.

Gas stations in a non-attainment area potentially can be forced to sell higher grade and (more expensive) fuel and restrictions can also be placed on industry.

In December, the Douglas County Air Quality Advisory Committee and the Kansas Department of Health and Environment recommended to the EPA that Douglas County should not be part of the Kansas City non-attainment region.

Organizations that take on clean diesel projects will reduce premature deaths, asthma attacks and other respiratory ailments, lost work days and other health conditions.

“Given that Douglas County is on the cusp of being a non-attainment area for ozone pollution, we urge all local diesel fleets to take advantage of the program so that air quality is improved for all residents of Douglas County,” said Richard

Ziesenis, Director of Environmental Health at the Lawrence-Douglas County Health Department.

For more information on the grant and how to apply, go to <http://www.kdheks.gov/bar/air-monitor/stimgrant.html> or call the Lawrence-Douglas County Health Department's Environmental Health program at 843-3060.

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