

*Report by Epele Naivalu, Manager Engineering Works and Services*

## **RECOMMENDATION**

***That Council note the information concerning implementation of the Environmental Protection Agency Clean Machine Program.***

## PURPOSE OF REPORT

To inform Council of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Program and the strategies Council has or intends to have in place to align with the Program.

## REPORT

### Background

The aim of the EPA Clean Machine Program is to reduce diesel exhaust emissions from diesel plant and equipment that is used in construction and industrial activities such as cranes, dozers, loaders, graders, tractors and pumps.

Diesel exhaust emissions are a significant source of air pollution, especially particulate matter.

- Exhaust emissions from diesel plant and equipment account for 35% of fine particulate matter in some local government areas in the NSW Greater Metropolitan Region.
- Exposure to diesel particulates is linked to heart and lung diseases, increased hospital admissions, asthma attacks and other respiratory symptoms, lost days and premature death.
- The International Agency for Research on Cancer, which is part of the World Health Organisation, classifies diesel engine exhaust as carcinogenic based on evidence it is a cause of lung cancer.
- Locally diesel particle levels around construction or industrial sites can be significantly higher than background levels. This is of particular concern for workers and residents.
- There are currently no emissions standards for diesel plant and equipment sold in Australia, while the United States and Europe have had standards in place since the mid 1990's. The majority of new engines sold in Australia are seven or more years behind contemporary US and European emission standards.

The NSW Environmental Protection Agency works in partnerships with Roads and Maritime Services and public and private sector organisations to implement the Clean Machine Program. The EPA Clean Machine Program is the first program in Australia to actively promote the use and uptake of cleaner diesel equipment. The Program is made up of three elements as described below and partners implement all or some of the program elements depending on the needs and capacity of the organisation:

- **Procurement Practices:** Partners include the use of cleaner non-road diesel engines as a consideration in procurement policies for the purchase and hire of equipment and for third party contractors.
- **Worksite Guidelines:** Partners adopt guidelines for managing diesel exhaust emissions from worksite operations. These could include reducing engine idling, ensuring engines are properly maintained and locating engines away from sensitive populations such as schools and hospitals where possible.
- **Engine Retrofit:** The NSW Government is currently co-funding the retrofit of diesel engines with exhaust after treatment device (partial particle filters). Subsidies of up to 90% are available to qualifying engines based on age, size, frequency of use and useful life.

#### Strathfield Council Strategies

Council's response to elements of the program is set out below:

- **Procurement Practices:** Council already includes this criteria as a condition of purchase for new diesel plant/equipment.
- **Worksite Guidelines:** Council plans to implement guidelines followed by an initial educational process for managing diesel exhaust emissions from worksite operations. These will include reducing engine idling, ensuring engines are properly maintained and locating engines away from sensitive populations such as schools and aged care centres where possible.
- **Engine Retrofit:** Council's diesel plant and equipment include trucks, tractors, backhoe, skid steer loader, pumps, and small equipment. Most of the plant satisfies emission standards. The few that do not are in the process of being replaced for ones that do. Implementation of the program will result in greater protection for staff, the community and the environment.

#### REFERRAL FROM OTHER DEPARTMENT

No referral was required.

#### FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Financial implications are minimal and will be drawn from existing Council budget as appropriate.

#### Report approved by:

Rob Bourke
<b>Director Operations</b>