

Mid-Atlantic states' unique plan to replace region's dirtiest trucks

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"We no longer want our ports to be the place where old trucks go to die," says Joanne Throwe, director of the University of Maryland Environmental Finance Center Credit: UMD

Four Mid-Atlantic States are teaming up to offer one of the nation's most generous programs aimed at replacing old, highly polluting trucks.

Led by the University of Maryland and the Mid-Atlantic Regional Air Management Association (MARAMA), the new program will target the so-called short-haul "drayage" fleet that shuttles between their major ports, warehouses and local stores.

The effort seeks to double the impact of a federal cash-for-clunkers-style program with public and voluntary private contributions.

The Mid-Atlantic Dray Truck Replacement Program

<http://www.efc.umd.edu/cleandiesel.html%22> will offer \$15,000 to short-haul truckers to cover the down-payment on a new vehicle. The program is also helping arrange financing for the truckers. Over the next two years, it could replace hundreds of the most polluting delivery trucks in the region.

"We no longer want our ports to be the place where old trucks go to die," says the director of the University of Maryland Environmental Finance Center, Joanne Throwe, which is coordinating the new effort. "It's not just the air around the port that suffers - it's the routes the trucks follow throughout the region."

The Ports of Virginia, Baltimore, Wilmington and Philadelphia, with support from their states, are chipping in to add dollars to a \$3.3 million base grant from the U.S. [Environmental Protection Agency](#) (EPA). [Private industry](#) has also expressed interest in supporting the effort financially.

All together, the program will match the EPA support dollar-for-dollar with a combination of public and private money. Already, the organizers have lined up more than \$400,000 in public support. More is pending, and they are expecting financial commitments from the industry as well.

In the first year, Throwe hopes to raise approximately \$1.5 million in public and private money to extend the impact of the EPA grant.

As an example of the private enthusiasm the organizers hope to tap, Throwe points to today's announcement by the EPA and the Coalition for Responsible Transportation (CRT), whose members make up some of the largest shippers and distributors from around the country. The CRT will contribute financially to help extend EPA dray replacements nationwide.

"Businesses along the supply chain understand that they and their employees benefit by maintaining as clean a footprint as possible," Throe says. "Helping truck drivers - mainly from small businesses - to afford cleaner, greener trucks is a goal the private sector can embrace."

"This is a great example of how a government and industry partnership should work. The program goals are admirable - reducing emissions from mobile sources at the Mid-Atlantic ports to promote clean air for everyone's benefit, and the government is giving private industry the tools needed to achieve those objectives," says Louis Campion, president of the Maryland Motor Truck Association, Inc.

The Mid-Atlantic program is based on other clean truck efforts springing up around the country, including programs at the ports of Los Angeles, Long Beach, Oakland, Seattle, Tacoma, Virginia, Houston; and more recently the Port of New York and New Jersey.

Of all these programs, the Mid-Atlantic is the only one using a multi-state collaboration designed to boost the level of financial support to truckers.

The Port of Virginia was the first to open its own dray replacement initiative - the Green Operator Program - to the Mid-Atlantic partnership (in March 2011). The Port is leveraging the new regional effort with a \$300,000 contribution. Virginia has a waiting list of approximately 150 applicants, with 24 applications ready to receive approval for funding.

The Port of Baltimore, Maryland anticipates contributing financially as well. Over 75 short-haul truckers operating at the Port of Baltimore have expressed interest in applying for replacement support.

The Ports of Philadelphia and Wilmington are set to open their replacement initiative in July and already have had considerable interest

from dozens of carriers and sponsors.

The EFC <http://efc.umd.edu/> is one of ten university-based centers across the country providing communities with the tools and information necessary to manage change for a healthy environment and an enhanced quality of life.

Provided by University of Maryland

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