

VW fix for some cheating diesels could be approved soon

October 14 2016, by Tom Krisher And Dee-Ann Durbin

Repairs that would fix about 15 percent of Volkswagen's cheating 2-liter diesel engines could be approved by regulators in the next few weeks.

Volkswagen submitted plans in early August to repair about 67,000 cars from the 2015 model year. The Environmental Protection Agency says it won't act on the plans until after a federal judge approves an order settling lawsuits against the German automaker. That could come at a court hearing Tuesday in San Francisco.

Under the settlement, VW must submit plans to fix the rest of the 475,000 diesels in November and December.

The 2015 Golfs, Jettas and Beetles are the easiest to fix. The EPA and Volkswagen wouldn't comment, but dealers say repairs include a software update and new exhaust system parts that would come in a year.

Volkswagen has admitted wrongdoing in equipping cars with software to evade emissions testing. The software recognized when the cars were being tested on a treadmill and turned on pollution controls. The controls were turned off when the cars returned to the road. The EPA alleged the scheme let the cars spew more than 40 times the allowable limit of nitrogen oxide, which can cause respiratory problems in humans.

In June, VW agreed to a \$15 billion civil settlement with environmental authorities, state governments and vehicle owners. It requires the company to spend up to \$10 billion buying back or fixing the 2-liter cars

and paying owners an additional \$5,100 to \$10,000 each. The settlement does not cover another 85,000 vehicles with 3-liter [diesel engines](#) that also cheated on tests.

Criminal investigations also are underway in the U.S. and Germany. A Volkswagen engineer has pleaded guilty to U.S. charges and has agreed to cooperate with federal authorities in the investigation.

Once Judge Breyer approves the settlement, customers can start making appointments at dealers for VW to buy back their cars. Dealers are preparing for that to start in early November. The EPA says it and the California Air Resources Board will act on the fix "as soon as reasonably appropriate" after the court approves the settlement.

Tom Backer, general manager of a VW dealer in White Plains, New York, said he's hoping for court and EPA approval of the repairs so he can begin selling 2015 diesels early next month, perhaps to people who are selling their diesels back to VW. He's been told the software fix would take little time, but the catalytic converter replacement would take around nine hours.

Repairs of the other 2-liter VW models dating to 2009 have been problematic since the scandal broke in September of 2015 with no plans submitted yet. Those repairs would cover the Jetta, Golf and Beetle from 2009 to 2014, and the Passat from 2012 to 2014.

The EPA says it is still investigating emissions cheating problems with the 3-liter diesels, and it's exploring solutions that are "technically sound and a fair deal for consumers."

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