



POLICY GUIDE

Improving air quality and mitigating other sources of pollution

Transportation accounts for more than 34 percent of carbon emissions, 20 percent of PM^{2.5}, and approximately 70 percent of all US oil use, consuming more than 13.5 million barrels of oil per day. Health research has established a strong relationship between air pollution and health effects ranging from respiratory symptoms to the onset and exacerbation of chronic heart and lung diseases.^{1,2}

Opportunities to Improve Air Quality and Mitigate Other Sources of Pollution:

- » Provide multimodal transportation options.
- » Improve monitoring of locations where pollution sources are concentrated.
- » Explore strategies to protect residential and community facilities from transportation-related emissions.
- » Minimize exposure to particulate matter (PM).
- » Explore opportunities to prioritize freight rail connections.
- » Promote the use of clean energy technology.
- » Encourage shifts from driving to public transportation and active transportation.

Economic Incentive Programs

Economic incentive programs (EIPs) use market-based strategies to encourage people to reduce emissions of air pollutants in the most efficient manner.

State Implementation Programs

Under section 110 of the Clean Air Act, a State Implementation Plan (SIP) credit for Voluntary Mobile Source Emission Reduction Programs (VMEPs) exists. A state can submit a SIP, which:³

- Identifies and describes a VMEP.
- Contains projections of emission reductions attributable to the program, along with relevant technical support documentation.
- Commits to monitor, evaluate, and report the resulting emissions effect of the voluntary measure.
- Commits to remedy any shortfall if the VMEP program does not achieve projected emission reductions.

Turn for more »

State Policy Example⁴

Washington State Department of Transportation DOT adopted the following policies to reduce its own emissions:

- **Reduce idle times:** In order to reduce idling time, employees must turn off their engines when they are not needed; this reduces air pollutants and saves fuel.
- **Mow less often:** Maintenance crews mow the right of way area next to the roads less frequently; this reduces air pollutants and conserves fuel.
- **Install LED lights:** WA DOT installed LED lights on many vehicles and traffic signals; high-efficiency lights help extend battery life.

National Policy Example⁵

On August 28, 2012, the U.S. Department of Transportation and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency jointly issued the final version of new rules that require automakers to double the average fuel economy of new cars and trucks by 2025. These rules may encourage auto manufacturers to step up development of electrified vehicles, as well as sharply improve the mileage of their mass-market models through techniques such as more efficient engines and lighter car bodies.

1. U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. "Health Impacts Associated with Climate Change." Available at www.epa.gov/statelocalclimate/local/topics/health.html.
2. Environmental and Energy Study Institute. "Transportation and Communities Program." Available at www.eesi.org/Transportation_Communities_Program.
3. U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. "Improving Air Quality with Economic Incentive Programs." Available at www.epa.gov/ttn/oarpg/t1/memoranda/eipfin.pdf.
4. U.S. Department of Energy. "Alternative Fuels Data Center." Available at www.afdc.energy.gov/laws/state.
5. Vlasic, B. "U.S. Sets Higher Fuel Efficiency Standards." *New York Times*. Available at www.nytimes.com/2012/08/29/business/energy-environment/obama-unveils-tighter-fuel-efficiency-standards.html?_r=0.

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