



For Immediate Release:

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Contact: Megan Moore

Telephone: 225-219-3754

LDEQ to open a third round of applications for the Volkswagen Mitigation Trust Settlement projects

BATON ROUGE – Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality (LDEQ) is opening a third round of applications for projects and funding from the Volkswagen (VW) Mitigation Trust on Aug. 1. Application submittal for project funding will be available through the LDEQ's VW webpage online form:

<https://deq.louisiana.gov/form/volkswagen-eligible-mitigation-action-projectapplication-state-beneficiary-louisiana>. The deadline to submit Environmental Mitigation Action applications for the third round is Oct. 1, 2019. If you have any questions concerning the application, please send them to vwsettlement@la.gov.

Louisiana is soliciting proposed projects for consideration by the LDEQ, the Department of Natural Resources (LDNR), and the Department of Transportation and Development (LDOTD). Proposed projects are reviewed (1) to determine qualification pursuant to Appendix D-2; and (2) in consideration of appropriate goals, priorities, costs and impacts from the projects.

In 2017, Volkswagen pled guilty to charges that the company had installed software in its model year 2009-2016 2.0-liter and 3.0-liter diesel cars which circumvented Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) emissions standards using a "defeat device." These vehicles emit up to 40 times more pollution than emissions standards allow in the form of nitrogen oxides (NOx), a pollutant that harms public health and contributes to ozone or smog formation. A federal court in California approved the Volkswagen settlement on Oct. 25, 2016. Volkswagen is required to pay \$2.9 billion into an environmental mitigation trust fund to be shared among the states and tribes. Louisiana will receive more than \$19 million over three years. The money will be used to offset the excess air pollution caused by VW's actions. This is the application for the third year funds.

There were three Louisiana state agencies designated to receive equal shares of the fund: LDEQ, the Louisiana Department of Natural Resources (LDNR) and the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development (LDOTD). These agencies were tasked to allocate the VW Mitigation Trust funds. The Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality (LDEQ) was designated the lead agency (beneficiary) by the Office of Gov. John Bel Edwards.

The agencies, with public input, are proposing to pool their funds to target replacement of eligible diesel school buses. The bus replacement program will offer partial funding to school districts to replace older diesel buses with electric, alternative fuel or high-efficiency diesel vehicles. However, government and non-government organizations, alike, are eligible for consideration.

For more information on the VW Settlement, go to <https://deq.louisiana.gov/page/louisiana-volkswagenenvironmental-mitigation-trust>.

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