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UPMC's New Emission Requirements Exceed Federal Standards, Draw Praise from Environmental Groups

UPMC Policy Now Requires All Construction Equipment – New and Used – of 25 Horsepower or Greater to Meet Standards Years Before Federal Standard's Deadline

PITTSBURGH, June 14 – A new UPMC policy is receiving praise from local environmental groups. All construction crews working on UPMC sites now must use equipment that emits less diesel pollutants that include particulate matter, nitrogen oxide, greenhouse gases and other air emissions, according to the new policy unveiled today by the health system. The new policy requires all new and used construction equipment of 25 horsepower or greater to meet emission standards detailed in Tier 4 of the federal Clean Air Act – years before the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's deadline.

By 2014, the EPA regulation will phase in emission standards that affect virtually all off-road diesel-fueled equipment by requiring the use of ultra-low sulfur diesel fuel and lowering the allowable emissions of particulate matter and nitrogen oxide. In contrast, UPMC's proactive policy became effective this spring and applies to a broad range of new and used construction, landscape and grounds management equipment.

“As a leader in quality, patient-centered care, UPMC aims to be an industry leader in sustainable health care through implementing progressive environmental initiatives that benefit the communities it serves,” said Allison Robinson, Ph.D., director of Environmental Initiatives at UPMC.

All construction contractors working on UPMC grounds, buildings and facilities must use new equipment that meets the EPA's Tier 4 emission requirements and used equipment

that has been retrofitted to meet the requirements. The contractor must provide UPMC with certification issued by a supplier or manufacturer that illustrates the equipment meets the emission requirements, the policy states. This new policy applies to equipment as small as compact excavators or loaders used in landscape installations or small renovations to large bulldozers or cranes used in construction or demolition projects around UPMC.”

Pittsburgh environmental groups Clean Water Action and Group Against Smog and Pollution, which have been working on reducing diesel pollution in the region for years, said the policy is remarkable because UPMC is the first large institution locally to take such a step.

“This action by UPMC to require the cleanest emissions reduction technology on all vehicles working on their construction sites is a big step forward,” said Kathy Lawson, policy associate for Clean Water Action. “Thanks for being a leader in protecting our health and our environment.”

Lawson and Rachel Filippini, executive director of the Group Against Smog and Pollution, both said reductions in diesel particulate emissions can lead to decreases in health costs, missed school days, lost worker productivity and premature mortality.

“We applaud UPMC’s strong clean construction policy. It shows a commitment to minimizing the health damages caused by diesel emissions,” Filippini said. “Proven technology exists to clean up diesel vehicles and it is refreshing to see that their use is being required.”

“Construction Equipment is very durable, so it’s often less expensive to maintain, repair or retrofit a piece of equipment than to replace it. Therefore, it may take years for the new EPA standards to actually take effect since they apply only to new equipment,” said Thomas E. Kennedy, director of Capital Projects at UPMC. “UPMC believes the investment required to retrofit older vehicles is worthwhile, because it leads to better air quality now.”

About UPMC

UPMC is a \$9 billion global health enterprise with more than 50,000 employees headquartered in Pittsburgh, Pa., and is transforming health care by integrating more than 20 hospitals, 400 doctors’ offices and outpatient sites, a health insurance services division, and international and commercial services. Affiliated with the University of Pittsburgh Schools of the Health Sciences, UPMC is redefining health care by using innovative science, technology, and medicine to invent new models of accountable, cost-efficient, and patient-centered care. For more information on how UPMC is taking medicine from where it is to where it needs to be, go to <http://www.upmc.com/>.