

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release:

March 1, 2017

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North Dakota Department of Health Seeks Comments on Volkswagen Settlement Plan

BISMARCK, N.D. – On Oct. 25, 2016, a partial Consent Decree was finalized between the U.S. Department of Justice and the Volkswagen Corporation regarding the installation and use of emissions testing defeat devices in thousands of vehicles sold and operated in the United States beginning in 2009. These devices violated the federal Clean Air Act and increased air emissions of the pollutant nitrogen oxide (NO_x).

An environmental mitigation trust is being established as part of the partial Consent Decree to provide funds to the states to mitigate the negative air quality impacts. North Dakota's share of the trust will be up to 7.5 million dollars. The partial Consent Decree establishes a process for states to receive the funds and develop mitigation plans. It also identifies mitigation "actions" or projects eligible for funding. The partial Consent Decree identifying eligible projects can be viewed at <https://www.epa.gov/enforcement/volkswagen-clean-air-act-civil-settlement>.

The Governor's Office has appointed the North Dakota Department of Health (NDDoH) to develop and implement the mitigation plan for North Dakota. The plan will be based on actions that reduce emissions of NO_x and provide the greatest air quality benefit for the public. The NDDoH is seeking public input on drafting the mitigation plan. Interested parties may provide comments by following the requirements outlined in the partial Consent Decree. The NDDoH is not soliciting a request for project proposals at this time, but rather it is seeking comments to help guide the development of the mitigation plan.

A 30-day public comment period will begin Mar. 1, 2017, and end Mar. 31, 2017. Comments should be provided in writing to the NDDoH, Division of Air Quality, 918 E. Divide Avenue, Bismarck, ND 58501-1947. Comments also may be emailed to airquality@nd.gov. Comments must be received by the end of the public comment period to be considered in the development of the final mitigation plan. For more information, visit <http://www.ndhealth.gov/aq/Enforce.aspx>.

– 30 –

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