

Volkswagen Settlement Updates: Arkansas's Revised Mitigation Plan and Program Deadlines

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In 2015, when confronted with a United States Environmental Protection Agency Notice of Violation of the Clean Air Act, Volkswagen admitted to installing defeat devices in the diesel engine software of approximately 500,000 U.S. vehicles in order to bypass emissions tests.

As a result of settlements entered in a federal lawsuit that followed, the State of Arkansas was allocated nearly \$14.6 million to be used towards air pollution mitigation and prevention projects.

The Arkansas Department of Energy and Environment, Division of Environmental Quality (DEQ) is the lead agency in charge of developing the pollution mitigation and prevention plans.

The first Volkswagen Mitigation Plan was submitted by DEQ to the settlement trustee on June 25, 2018. Since that time, the plan was revised. An amended Volkswagen Mitigation Plan was submitted by DEQ on June 3, 2019 and can be accessed here: <https://www.adeq.state.ar.us/air/planning/vw/pdfs/final--bmp-amended-june-2019.pdf>.

In the revised plan, DEQ identified five mitigation programs:

- The Advanced Bus and Clean (ABC) Transportation Program;
- The Light-Duty Vehicle Infrastructure Program (EVSE);
- The Arkansas Clean Fuels Funding Assistance Program (Clean Fuels Program);
- The State Agency Fleet Emission Reduction (SAFER) Program; and
- A supplement to the State Clean Diesel Grant program (DERA match).

The DERA match program is underway.

The SAFER program is currently open and DEQ is accepting applications for consideration.

Of particular interest, the Clean Fuels Program is also open and DEQ will be accepting applications through November 30, 2019. It is a competitive funding opportunity for public, private, and non-profit entities seeking to repower or replace eligible medium trucks, heavy trucks, or buses with new lower-emitting alternative-fueled technologies.

The EVSE program request for proposals and rebate application materials are still being developed by DEQ. The last and most ambitious program that has not yet been rolled out is the ABC Transportation Pilot program. This program will fund a percentage of the purchase price of alternative-fueled buses for school districts and public transit agencies. The program would fund the purchase of a minimum of five and up to twenty buses to replace eligible diesel buses per pilot.

For more information on the Volkswagen settlement, visit DEQ's webpage [here](#):