

# The **REDUCE Act (SB 398)**: Reducing Environmental Degradation for the Underserved through Community Engagement

## Health Effects of Diesel

### Breathing diesel truck exhaust can contribute to cancer risk and other diseases

Trucks, trains, and heavy equipment are usually powered by diesel fuel. They release a combination of fine soot and particles, containing roughly 40 different toxic air contaminants, 15 of which are known to cause cancer. Children, seniors, people with heart and lung conditions, and pregnant women are especially vulnerable.

### Diesel exhaust is not safe for humans

Diesel exhaust can be large enough to see (soot) or so small that, when inhaled, it goes very deep into the lungs where it can enter the bloodstream and cause serious health problems. Diesel exhaust is associated with new cases of asthma, heart disease, cancer, cardiopulmonary disease, cardiovascular disease, bronchial infections, and premature death.

### Children living close to heavy traffic are at risk

Studies found that children who live or attend school near diesel truck traffic may have slower lung development and significant increases in lung diseases such as asthma and bronchitis.

To find out more about the REDUCE Act, contact [RCRehr@gmail.com](mailto:RCRehr@gmail.com) or 443-668-7467

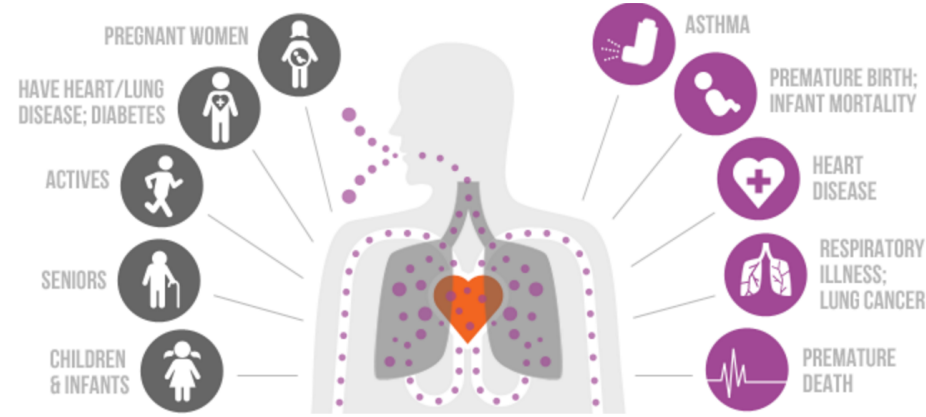
Lung function is about 10 percent lower in kids who grow up near the freeways. Kids living within 550 feet of heavy traffic have more medical visits than those who live further away. Children born to mothers living within 1000 feet of a freeway appear to be twice as likely to have autism.

### Women living close to heavy traffic are at risk

Pregnant women who have been exposed to high levels of heavy traffic are at greater risk for giving birth to premature and low-weight babies. These poor birth outcomes can result in life-long problems for children. Traffic related air pollution is associated with diabetes in elderly women. Breast cancer in post-menopausal women is also associated with exposure to heavy traffic.

### Health improves when heavy traffic is kept farther away

Residential distance from diesel truck traffic significantly affects the rate of adverse health effects. Health substantially improves when there is a 500 foot separation between community and truck traffic. Pollution related to diesel truck traffic is highest within 490 - 650 feet. Asthma rates improve for residents living more than 650 feet



Pictured Above: People at risk for increased health effects of diesel truck traffic  
Image courtesy of The Breathe Project (SW-PA)

from traffic. Health significantly benefits when children live farther away from heavy traffic.

### Government agencies and scientists warn about health effects of diesel exhaust

Diesel Particulate Matter (DPM), is regulated as a "Toxic Air Contaminant" in California based on studies showing lung cancer in exposed truck drivers and rail workers. The U.S. EPA says DPM is likely to cause cancer.

According to the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality, diesel exhaust is 100 times more toxic than gasoline exhaust. Although diesel powered vehicles are a small portion of the vehicles on the road (six percent in Oregon), their air pollution impacts are large (60 to 70 percent of particulate emissions from all vehicles).

California Air Resources Board Recommended Policy is that sensitive land uses such as residences, schools, day care centers, playgrounds, and medical facilities should not be sited within 500 feet of heavy traffic.