

Clearing the Air

Reducing Health Risks from Diesel Pollution

A resource for parents, schools, health professionals, and advocates

Diesel exhaust is a harmful mix of fine particulate matter, nitrogen oxides, respiratory irritants, and carcinogens from buses, trucks, generators, and other traffic sources.



Why children are at risk

Children and infants are especially sensitive to air pollution because they breathe more air relative to their body weight and their lungs and organs are still developing. Exposure prevention can help reduce chronic conditions that may persist into adulthood.

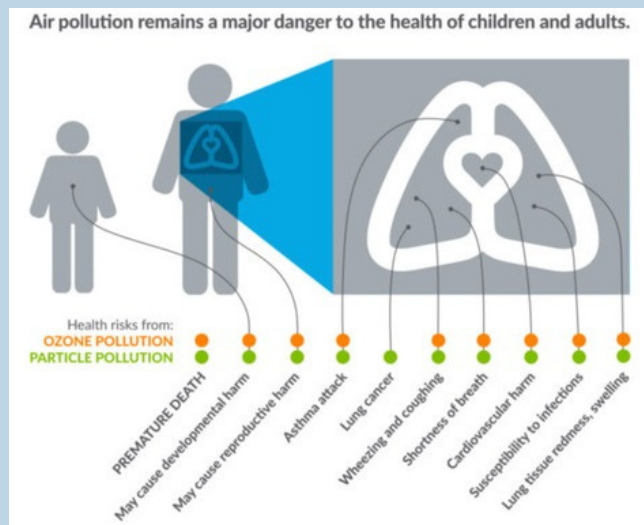


Image source: American Lung Association

Pennsylvania children face elevated diesel risks

Pennsylvania is #7 in the nation for elevated lifetime cancer risk from diesel combustion-related particulate pollution. In 17 of the state's 67 counties, diesel soot places residents in the highest risk category.

Distance matters

Living, playing, or going to school within 500 meters (0.3 miles) of a major roadway or trucking corridor is associated with acute and chronic health risks from diesel exhaust.

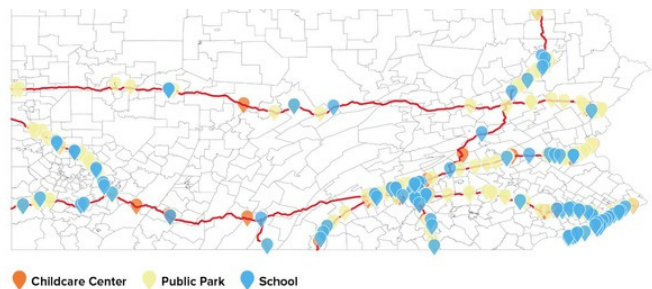


Image source: Clean Trucks PA Coalition

Reduce pollution at the source

Cleaner air requires action from schools, communities, and policymakers, including stronger vehicle emission standards, clean transportation investments, safe distances of schools from major roadways and healthier neighborhoods in high-traffic areas.

- Check daily air pollution forecasts at airnow.gov.
- Limit outdoor play or exercise when air quality is unhealthy.
- Avoid high-traffic areas when possible, especially during heavy traffic times
- Create no-idling zones during drop-off and pick-up
- Improve traffic flow and support walking, biking, and carpooling
- Plant trees or green barriers near busy roads

