



State of Utah

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NEWS RELEASE

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Cities, Schools & Agencies Get VW Settlement to Replace Old Diesel Vehicles

SALT LAKE CITY – The Utah Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) has selected 14 government entities to receive funding for diesel vehicle replacement projects through the State’s \$35 million share of the Volkswagen (VW) Clean Diesel Settlement.

Governor Gary R. Herbert designated the DEQ to oversee the settlement involving the automotive manufacturer, Volkswagen Group (Volkswagen, Audi and Porsche), for violations of the Clean Air Act. After careful evaluation, including receiving public input and recommendations from the State VW Advisory Committee, the DEQ allocated 73.5 percent, approximately \$25.5 million of the settlement monies, for replacing Class 4-8 local freight trucks, school buses, transit buses and/or shuttle buses.

“The VW settlement allows the DEQ to fund mitigation projects in nine eligible categories which are expected to mitigate the excess nitrogen oxides (NO_x) emissions from the illegal VW vehicles that were operating throughout the state,” said Lisa Burr, environmental planning consultant for Division of Air Quality. Replacing heavy-duty diesel vehicles with newer, cleaner vehicles is an example of projects that are eligible for funding under the settlement. Burr said new heavy-duty vehicles can be 92-100% cleaner than 2006 and older vehicles.

Last fall, the DEQ invited federal, state, and local governments to submit applications for funding potential diesel vehicle replacement projects. “Providing government entities the opportunity to invest in cleaner vehicles at no cost to tax payers while improving air quality provides a double benefit to tax payers,” said DEQ Interim Executive Director Scott Baird. “This is a unique opportunity for the state to reduce emissions from mobile sources, which contribute significantly to our overall emissions,” he added.

The DEQ received 50 applications that included 379 total vehicles. Each proposed vehicle replacement was evaluated for its cost effectiveness of achieving NO_x reductions, location of operation (projects located in nonattainment areas received higher scores), and other community benefits. Applications that included electric vehicle projects received higher scores and will be funded at a higher percentage. The DEQ selected 104 vehicles to replace at 50-65 percent of the cost of the new vehicle.

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The successful applicants are:

- City of Bountiful
- City of North Salt Lake
- City of Orem
- Canyons School District
- Davis School District
- Jordan School District
- Park City Municipal Corporation
- Pleasant Grove City
- Salt Lake Urban Search and Rescue
- Salt Lake City Corporation
- Salt Lake City School District
- Tooele School District
- Utah Department of Transportation
- Utah Transit Authority

Park City Municipal Corporation, Salt Lake City School District (SLCSD), and Utah Transit Authority will be replacing their diesel vehicles with electric vehicles. The remaining entities will replace their diesel vehicles with new clean diesel vehicles.

“I can’t tell you how excited we are to be receiving this award. It gives the district an opportunity to embark on a new school bus technology that we otherwise wouldn’t have the resources for. I believe that electric school buses are the future for public school busing along the Wasatch Front,” said Martin Yablonovsky, Director of Transportation for Salt Lake City School District. “It is rewarding to be the first district in the state to experience this new technology,” he added. SLCSD will use the new electric school buses to transport special need students who live in the Rose Park neighborhood, an area prone to environmental justice issues.

The DEQ has until October 2, 2027, to obligate the VW settlement funds through grant awards, but has already awarded the available amount. Successful awardees will have three years to complete their projects.

Earlier this year, the DEQ announced awards for electric vehicle charging equipment projects, another eligible category through the settlement. DEQ allocated \$3.8 million for those projects, which is 11 percent of the settlement.

The public can learn more about the VW Settlement from the DEQ’s VW website, vw.utah.gov.

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About DEQ

Established in 1991, the Utah Department of Environmental Quality's (DEQ) mission is to safeguard and improve Utah's air, land and water through balanced regulation. DEQ implements state and federal environmental laws and works with individuals, community groups and businesses to protect the quality of Utah's air, land and water. For more information, visit www.deq.utah.gov, follow DEQ on Facebook ([utahdeq](https://www.facebook.com/utahdeq)) and Twitter ([UtahDEQ](https://twitter.com/UtahDEQ)), or call 1-800-458-0145.