

## **The Portland Tribune**

# **City and County Move to Eliminate 'Dirty Diesel' Engines on Public Construction Projects**

*By Steve Law*

*September 20, 2018*

**Portland, Multnomah County hope other governments, and then the state, will enact tougher regulations as well.**

After more than a decade of planning, pilot projects and other preliminaries, the Portland City Council and Multnomah County Board of Commissioners jointly passed measures Thursday that will require the use of "clean diesel" vehicles and off-road equipment on publicly funded construction projects.

Diesel exhaust is a known carcinogen, causing an estimated 400 or more premature deaths in Oregon each year, in addition to increasing asthma attacks, heart disease, and nervous system effects. The Oregon Legislature has failed to adopt strong measures to clean up the trucking fleet as California has done, so city and county officials decided they could move forward on an area within their jurisdiction: Construction projects where public money is involved.

"Together, we will send a message that the era of dirty diesel engines is coming to an end," declared Deborah Kafoury, Multnomah County chair, appearing before the Portland City Council.

Owners of construction and other off-road equipment could either switch to newer, so-called clean-diesel engines that don't generate many diesel particulates, or install filters that keep up to 95 percent of the hazardous materials from entering the air. The measure would be phased in over seven years, once the two local governments adopt formal ordinances that give some legal teeth to Thursday's resolutions.

One of the details to be worked out is the minimum level of construction contract that will trigger the new requirements.

Under the city version of the resolution, "Procurement Services and the Bureau of Planning and Sustainability must develop a program framework and identify the necessary resources to require contractors working on city construction projects to use equipment that controls diesel exhaust to protect public health."

City commissioners asked that the ordinance come before them for a final vote on Dec. 13.

According to the resolution approved Thursday, "65 percent of diesel particulate matter in the Portland-area is emitted from non-road equipment, such as construction equipment."

One concern that has delayed implementation of the new requirement is the potential impact on minority- and woman-owned contracting firms, which tend to be smaller and have less wherewithal to finance new equipment. The city and county will ask the Oregon Legislature to designate some of the Volkswagen diesel settlement money to provide aid to those small-business owners, to help them make the transition.

On the other hand, people of color and low-income people often live closer to rail yards and freeways, which have some of the most dangerous air because of diesel emissions.

The city and county previously retrofitted most of their own construction vehicles and equipment fueled by diesel. There also have been major efforts to replace diesel buses.

Privately owned construction and off-road equipment takes the effort a step further.

Other local governments, including Metro, Washington and Clackamas counties and the Port of Portland, were involved in framing the new plan. City and county leaders expressed hope that the other jurisdictions will follow suit.

Mayor Ted Wheeler noted that there's been little progress made at the state level to remedy the problem. But he hopes the city and county action "will break loose whatever logjams exist at the state level."

## Willamette Week

### Portland Parks And Rec Continues To Use Roundup After Recent Cancer Controversy

*By Anamika Vaughn  
September 20, 2018*

**Monsanto insists that the substance is completely safe and does not cause cancer. The scientific community is not so certain.**

Last August, a California jury found Monsanto liable for their popular glyphosate-based herbicide 'Roundup' causing non-Hodgkin's lymphoma in school groundskeeper Dewayne Johnson. The company was fined \$289 million in damages and fines.

Now, even after this court decision, Portland Parks and Recreation is still using Monsanto's weed killers in Portland's parks. As recently as Sept. 15, a Portland Twitter user tweeted out a sign in Washington Park warning of the use of Roundup Pro to manage vegetation.

The parks bureau confirms it's still using Roundup.

"The [integrated pest management] approach is used by parks systems around the country and is considered the modern, science-based standard for progressive and sustainable park stewardship," said Mark Ross, a spokesman for Portland Parks & Recreation. "Through its holistic blend of cultural, mechanical, biological and judicious chemical methods, IPM programs treat herbicide as a last resort. This ensures we can address potential health and environmental impacts of any of our practices."

"While we can tolerate weeds in our parks, there is a need to target certain areas such as tree circles, shrub beds, and some park infrastructure to protect tree root flares, plantings, and maintain park amenities," Ross continues. "This is done through the sensible use of carefully screened herbicides on certain targets—and never on grassy areas of parks."

No comment was made on the use of potentially cancer-causing chemicals in Portland's public parks, though Ross did describe IPM approach as a "modern, science-based standard for progressive and sustainable park stewardship."

Monsanto plans to fight the California verdict, claiming that the "decision does not change the fact that more than 800 scientific studies and reviews...support the fact that glyphosate does not cause cancer, and did not cause Mr. Johnson's cancer."

Was the jury right? Does glyphosate cause cancer?

The answer to those questions is not clear. Aside from Monsanto's insistence that the substance is completely safe and does not cause cancer, the scientific community is not so certain.

In 2015, France-based International Agency for Research on Cancer, an agency of the World Health Organization, released a report finding glyphosate "probably carcinogenic to humans," meaning that "there is limited evidence of carcinogenicity in humans and sufficient evidence of carcinogenicity in experimental animals."

But in 2016, the IARC was heavily criticized for misleading classifications, cherry-picking data and studies, as well as confusing and scaring the public about carcinogens.

In 2016, the world health organization put out another report together with the United Nations that found "there is some evidence of a positive association between glyphosate exposure and risk of NHL...however, it is notable that the only large cohort study of high quality found no evidence of an association at any exposure level." The report further concluded that "glyphosate is unlikely to pose a carcinogenic risk to humans from exposure through the diet."

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency put out a report in 2016 with their own evaluations of the safety of glyphosate, concluding that "the available data at this time do not support a carcinogenic process for glyphosate." But the EPA has been criticized for working too closely with Monsanto.

## **New Numbers Show Portland Collected More Than \$800K From Public Record Requesters Last Fiscal Year**

*By Katie Shepherd  
September 21, 2018*

**The city performed a new analysis of its data after WW asked for public records that show how much money the city takes from requesters.**

The City of Portland collected more than \$800,000 to provide public records in the last fiscal year, more than doubling the total collected two years earlier.

The City Attorney's Office provided new data after WW requested public records showing how much the city had collected from requesters since December 2015, when Portland adopted a new record tracking system called GovQA.

The new numbers still reflect that the total fees collected by the city have been steadily rising for the past three years, and at a faster rate than the number of requests have increased.

The city says these fees do not cover the "actual cost" of producing public records.

"It is important to note that the fees for public records do not cover the actual cost of responding to the requests," says Jenifer Johnston, a senior deputy city attorney, in a letter sharing the new analysis with WW. "The City does not make a profit on charging for public records requests. The fees would be much higher if the City charged fees to truly cover the actual costs of providing the records as the City is permitted to do under the Oregon Public Records Law."

The numbers the city initially provided in response to WW's records request did not include comprehensive totals because GovQA does not track every transaction done by the city. GovQA also records some requests that do not involve public records.

After running a new analysis that accounts for all of the public records transactions city-wide, the city says it collected \$804,476 in FY 17-18. In FY 15-16, Portland only took in \$311,520 from people who requested public records.

The city attributes some of that increase to a jump in the total number of requests. But the number of request did not grow as fast as the fees. The number of requests increased by 76 percent, while the total fees charged increased by 158 percent.

Johnston says that the number of requests for FY 15-16 may be under-reported because it did not adopt the GovQA system until December 2015.

The city also points to an increase in the automatic fees charged by the Portland Police Bureau, which increased the fee to provide many types of records from \$10 to \$30 in 2016. Because the vast majority of records requests are submitted to the Police Bureau, this fee structure likely increased the total amount of money collected.

## **The Skanner**

### **PBOT Announces Upcoming Focus Groups**

*By September 20, 2018*

The Portland Bureau of Transportation (PBOT) invites members of the Black community to participate in upcoming transportation focus groups on the following topics:

#### **Lloyd to Woodlawn Neighborhood Greenway**

This project is looking to develop a neighborhood greenway on NE 7th or NE 9th (or a combination of both). Neighborhood greenways redesign streets to slow traffic and limit car access in order to make safer corridors for pedestrians and bikers. At this time, PBOT is interested in learning more about how the Black community is utilizing these streets. Focus groups will be hosted in October or November. Project website: <https://www.portlandoregon.gov/TRANSPORTATION/75668>

#### **Electric Scooter Pilot Program**

Earlier this summer, PBOT announced a four-month pilot period for shared electric scooters to be deployed across Portland. As the pilot period nears its end, the agency will host at least three community focus groups to help inform whether scooters will become more permanent in our city. Priority demographics for these focus groups include: (1) Black community; (2) disability community; (3) East Portland residents. These focus groups will be hosted in October. Program website: <https://www.portlandoregon.gov/transportation/77294>

#### **Transportation Incentives for Affordable Housing Residents**

Around the City neighborhoods and commercial districts are starting to adopt parking permit programs to manage parking demand and encourage other modes of transportation. A part of the programs design includes the permit funds contributing to discounted transportation options such as public transportation, BIKETOWN and car sharing. PBOT is looking to expand similar options to affordable housing residents across the city, whether or not they living in a parking permit district. Over the next year the agency will be partnering with property managers and community organizations who support affordable housing residents to pilot a program that will provide these transportation incentives for free. The agency is looking to host focus groups with

affordable housing tenants to inform how this program is designed. Focus groups will be hosted by early November.

Anyone interested in providing input on one of these topics should submit their topic interest and information at this link -- <https://bit.ly/2OD66EN> -- by Oct. 1 and the agency will follow up with more information.

PBOT also invites members of the community to apply for the PBOT Bureau and Budget Advisory Committee! More information is available [here](#). Applications are due Sept. 24. Please contact Tosin Abiodun for more information: [Tosin.Abiodun@portlandoregon.gov](mailto:Tosin.Abiodun@portlandoregon.gov) or (503) 823-5080.