

Wisconsin Environment: Advocates urge EPA to deliver clean trucks for Wisconsin

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MADISON, Wis. – The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is accepting public comments on its federal [clean trucks rule](#) until Monday May 16. Ahead of the deadline, Wisconsin Environment, Wisconsin Health Professionals for Climate Action, and Masters Gallery Foods presented a webinar on Thursday, [Clean Trucks for Wisconsin](#), that highlighted the benefits of cleaner trucks for the state. Heavy-duty vehicles, including trucks and buses, emit toxic air pollutants that cause and exacerbate heart and respiratory diseases from asthma to lung cancer. Those vehicles also [emit greenhouse gases](#) that contribute to the climate crisis.

“Cleaning up the pollution from the biggest trucks on our roads is necessary to slow global warming,” said Wisconsin Environment Destination: Zero Carbon director [Morgan Folger](#). “From [life-threatening heat waves](#) to severe storms and [flooding](#), we’re already seeing devastating impacts of climate change in Wisconsin. To protect our lungs and our climate, EPA needs to strengthen this rule.”

At the webinar, the panelists discussed the threats of toxic diesel pollution from trucks and buses, and how strong action from the EPA could deliver cleaner air and accelerate the transition to electric trucks. Speakers included:

- Dr. Victoria Gillet, member of Wisconsin Health Professionals for Climate Action
- Eric Jens, Director of Supply Chain – Logistics/Warehouse, Masters Gallery Foods

- Morgan Folger, Destination: Zero Carbon director, Wisconsin Environment

Transportation is the [second-largest contributor](#) to climate change in Wisconsin, fueling the extreme weather that has devastated families, farms and businesses across the state. Transportation-related pollution may also have disproportionately larger [impacts on health](#) compared to other sources because they generally emit pollution closer to people.

“Pollution from diesel-powered trucks and buses pollutes our air with nitrogen oxide emissions, ground-level ozone and particle pollution,” said Milwaukee-based internal medicine specialist Dr. Victoria Gillet. “From the moment of conception to their last breath, exposure to these pollutants makes my patients sicker causing still births, preterm births, delayed cognitive development in children, asthma, heart attacks, cancer, strokes, and dementia. It is not right that breathing air can make you so sick.”

The EPA’s proposed clean trucks rule would limit smog-forming nitrogen oxides (NOx) and create a greenhouse gas emission standard for trucks. Advocates called on the agency to strengthen the rule to push the truck manufacturing industry to reduce pollution and accelerate the market for electric trucks. In addition to the health and climate benefits associated with zero tailpipe pollution, electric trucks provide an opportunity for businesses to save money on fuel and maintenance while reducing their environmental impact.

“Masters Gallery Foods strives to manufacture and distribute products with minimum energy consumption and waste generation,” said Andy Pfister, vice president of procurement and industrial sales for Masters Gallery Foods. “The Orange EV truck aligns with our sustainability efforts, providing a significant increase in efficiency and longevity compared to diesels, thereby also reducing the necessity and frequency of replacing vehicles. Our plan is to go completely electric with our terminal fleet by June 2023.”

With federal climate action uncertain in congress, the Biden Administration must focus on executive agency actions to tackle the climate crisis. EPA’s clean trucks rule can help meet President Joe Biden’s goal of reaching [50% emissions reductions by 2030](#). Members of the public can submit comments to the EPA until Monday, May 16.

“Cleaner trucks can deliver cleaner air for Wisconsin,” concluded Folger. “The EPA should go back to the drawing board to create a rule that will safeguard our health and climate.”