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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**National Clean Diesel Campaign to Benefit Minnesota**

*Project to reduce diesel pollution by the Minnesota Environmental Initiative wins  
Federal support that will also benefit the state's economy*

MINNEAPOLIS, Minn. – The Minnesota Environmental Initiative (MEI) has been awarded a \$400,000 grant by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to reduce emissions from diesel vehicles in the state. The grant is part of the Midwest Clean Diesel Initiative, a program of the EPA's National Clean Diesel Campaign. A total of 13 groups received funding, including MEI in Minnesota and organizations in Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio, and Wisconsin.

MEI reduces diesel pollution in Minnesota by coordinating Project Green Fleet, a voluntary collaboration of businesses, government agencies, and nonprofit organizations that has made possible the retrofitting of older school buses with pollution control equipment. Project Green Fleet installs EPA approved filters and catalyst mufflers that can reduce engine emissions by up to 50%. Since it began in 2005, Project Green Fleet has retrofitted more than 1200 school buses statewide and has expanded its scope to include other diesel vehicles as well. The Midwest Clean Diesel Initiative funds will be used to retrofit another 145 school buses and 20 heavy-duty municipal trucks and off-road construction vehicles.

Many of the retrofits use equipment supplied and installed by Donaldson Company, a leading manufacturer of filtration systems and replacement parts, with offices in more than 50 countries and world headquarters in Bloomington, Minnesota. Other Minnesota firms that have partnered with MEI to retrofit diesel vehicles include Braun Intertec, Cemstone, and Aggregate Industries. Aggregate Industries has had earthmoving equipment retrofitted and rebuilt at the Ziegler Cat Corporate Headquarters in Bloomington to reduce the machines' diesel emissions.

Retrofitting diesel vehicles will create or retain jobs in Minnesota at firms like Donaldson, Ziegler Cat and their suppliers. EPA Acting Regional Administrator Bharat Mathur says the “EPA looks forward to funding even more of these very worthwhile clean diesel projects thanks to the American Recovery and Revitalization Act (ARRA), better known as the Economic Stimulus Package.” Under ARRA, about \$300 million will go to reducing emissions from diesel engines nationally. This additional funding is expected to improve air quality and create jobs at companies that manufacture emission control devices. The EPA anticipates that it will also create jobs for the technicians who install these devices on trucks, buses, and construction equipment.

Diesel vehicles represent only 10% of the traffic on Minnesota roads, but they contribute more than 50% of the fine particulate matter, or soot, generated by vehicles in the state. Fine particulate matter is the pollutant most often responsible for Air Quality Alerts in Minnesota, notably because of its association with asthma and other respiratory diseases. Off-road construction equipment is long-lived and so can generate a lot of emissions over time, often concentrated in a limited area. Project Green Fleet brings together businesses, nonprofits and government agencies to proactively address this problem. In fact, the project’s founding partners include both the Minnesota Chamber of Commerce and the Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy.

MEI’s Project Green Fleet was recognized as a national model for improving air quality when it received the EPA’s Clean Air Excellence Award in 2008, in the category Community Action, whose award winners must have “significantly improved the community quality of life.” In 2009, Project Green Fleet will receive the Governor’s Award for Pollution Prevention, a statewide award that recognizes superior environmental achievement by Minnesota’s businesses, nonprofits, government and institutions.

For more information about the Minnesota Environmental Initiative (MEI), visit [www.mn-ei.org](http://www.mn-ei.org) or contact Bill Allen at 612-334-3388 x108 or [ballen@mn-ei.org](mailto:ballen@mn-ei.org). For information about Project Green Fleet, visit [www.projectgreenfleet.org](http://www.projectgreenfleet.org) or contact MEI’s Bill Droessler at 612-334-3388 x103 or [bdroessler@mn-ei.org](mailto:bdroessler@mn-ei.org).