

# We Could Decrease Diesel Pollution

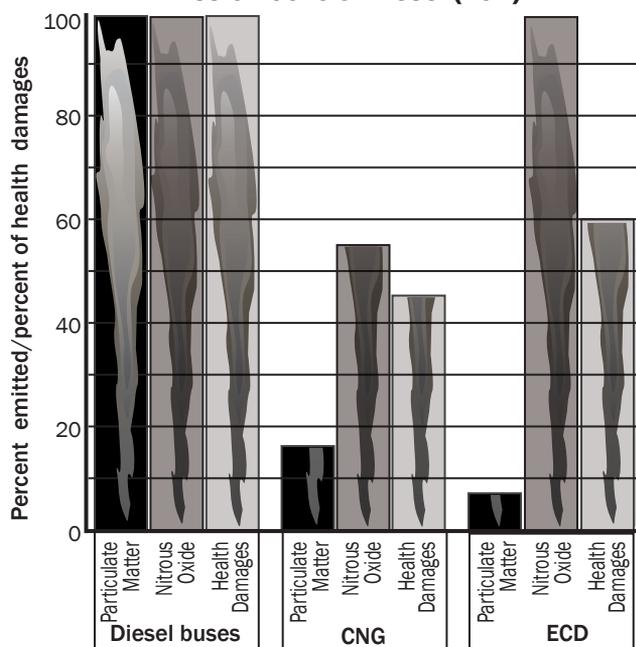
Robert Huey

I spent my childhood in Columbia, CT, in Tolland County. Growing up I was exposed to diesel soot pollution. The area is a high traffic route for 18-wheelers and other bigger diesel trucks. The lifetime cancer risk for diesel soot in this community exceeds the risk of all other air toxics combined that are tracked by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The average lifetime diesel soot cancer risk for a resident of Tolland County is 1 in 4,857. This risk is 206 times greater than EPA's acceptable cancer level of 1 in one million.

## Two Truths and a Lie

1. Write three statements—two truths and one lie—based on the graph below.
2. Exchange with a partner.
3. Take turns pointing out the truths and lies.

**Emissions for Buses that Run on Diesel, Compressed Natural Gas (CNG), and Emission Control Diesel (ECD)**



This area is ranked 6th out of the 8 counties in Connecticut for the most polluted. Unlike the industrial pollutants released from smokestacks, diesel engine exhaust is emitted at ground level, where people walk, bike, jog, drive cars, take the bus, or use other types of commuting. Diesel exhaust is composed of microscopic carbon soot particles that act to absorb metals and other toxic substances. When inhaled by humans, these tiny particles go from the lungs to the blood stream, which delivers them to vital organs. This causes diseases such as cancer, stroke, and heart attacks.

Unlike many of today's complex environmental problems, diesel pollution (thankfully) has readily available solutions. One of these solutions is that trucks should use a Diesel Particles Filter (DPF). These filters are put on the exhaust of diesel engines. These DPFs reduce particulate matter by 90%. This would greatly reduce the risk of disease and benefit our climate and environment.

Thousands of people in Tolland county are exposed to diesel soot. If people chose to do something about these potential harmful effects to their health and the health of their loved ones, children, friends, and family, I'm sure the voices of that many people could not be ignored.

Robert Huey was born in 1989 and raised in Tolland County, CT. He currently lives in Plainville, CT, and is enrolled in Plainville High School's Credit Diploma Program. After graduation, he hopes to enroll at New England Tractor Trailer Training School.

**Sources:** <catf.us/diesel>; <sustainability.psa-peugeot-citroen.com>

