



Union of Concerned Scientists
Citizens and Scientists for Environmental Solutions

Press Release

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New Report: Reducing Vehicular Global Warming Pollution Saves California Drivers Money

Curtain Rises on Precedent-Setting California Rulemaking

Berkeley, CA -- The Union of Concerned Scientists today released a new report demonstrating that technology already on the road can reduce heat-trapping pollution by 20 percent for \$600 per vehicle, paying for itself in just over 3 years. Technologies available in the near term could reduce emissions by 40 percent and recoup costs in just over 4 years. The study sets the bar for the California Air Resources Board as it formally embarks Tuesday on the first regulatory process in history to reduce global warming emissions from motor vehicles.

"Our research shows that a new fleet using technology some cars already employ could cut global warming pollution by 20 percent while saving California drivers more than \$2 billion," said Dr. Louise Bedsworth, Senior Analyst at the Union of Concerned Scientists and author of the new report, *Climate Control: Global Warming Solutions for California Cars*. "Californians are going to continue to drive the cars that they know and love, they will just have a smaller impact on the environment and their pocketbooks."

More than 1.5 million new vehicles are sold each year in California, making motor vehicles the largest single cause of global warming in the state. Without action to reduce these emissions, the total heat-trapping CO₂ produced by the state's passenger vehicle fleet will almost double by 2040.

While atmospheric changes are occurring on a global scale, the UCS report states, the effect of these changes will be felt locally. Higher temperatures deplete water supply, speed the formation of ozone and create a host of other public health problems that will place large demands on the state's economy throughout this century.

"Graphic evidence that temperatures are going up and snow levels are going to recede has focused our industry," said Bob Roberts, Executive Director of the California Ski Association. "Our position is quite simply, SUVs are terrific - but clean them up. The technology is out there."

In response to these threats and in the face of federal government inaction, California passed the historic Vehicle Global Warming Law (AB 1493 Pavley, 2002) that requires the California Air Resources Board to set regulations curbing global warming emissions from passenger vehicles beginning in 2009. CARB will hold its first formal workshop on the issue April 20th, in preparation for a draft proposal that will be issued in May and a statewide decision in the fall. In keeping with California's longstanding tradition of forging groundbreaking policies to control pollution, this regulation will be the first of its kind in the world.

The auto industry is expected to fight the new rules tooth and nail, just as they have every environmental or safety standard for the past three decades. The new UCS analysis demonstrates that automakers have the technology to meet strong global warming pollution standards, just as they have met past standards for other air pollutants or safety.

"From seatbelts to pollution controls, history has shown that even when automakers have the technology, they will not use it until required by law," Bedsworth said.

The UCS report includes detailed modeling that shows that technologies available in certain vehicles today could dramatically reduce global warming pollution if applied fleet wide. The report models a new California fleet using variable valve lift and timing found in Honda models, continuously variable transmissions used in the Saturn Ion, Nissan Murano, and the Mini Cooper, and cylinder deactivation used in 2004 DaimlerChrysler and General Motors models. When these technologies are applied to all new vehicles sold in California, fleet average global warming emissions are reduced by almost 20 percent. For example, applying these improvements to a Ford Explorer could reduce emissions by almost 24 percent and could reduce emissions from a Toyota Camry by almost 20 percent.

Further, the UCS report models fleet wide application of technologies available within the next five years. Using stoichiometric direct-injection engines, automated manual transmissions, 42V integrated starter-generators, and alternative refrigerants in air conditioners, emissions of global warming pollution could be reduced 40 percent fleet wide. These improvements could reduce emissions from a Ford Explorer by 43 percent and from a Toyota Camry by over 40 percent.

In addition to environmental benefits, the report says, a new vehicle fleet that realizes a 20 percent reduction in fleet average global warming emissions could save California drivers more than \$2 billion through reduced operating costs over the life of their vehicles. A 40 percent reduction could save consumers more than \$4 billion.

A copy of the new report can be found on the web at www.ucsusa.org. The Union of Concerned Scientists is a nonprofit partnership of scientists and citizens combining rigorous scientific analysis, innovative policy development and effective citizen advocacy to achieve practical environmental solutions.

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