



Alternative Fuel Vehicle Conversion Grant 2018 Responses to Questions

Agency Contacts for this Program

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Ohio EPA is offering an [Alternative Fuel Vehicle \(AFV\) Conversion Grant program](#) with a one-time allocation of \$5 million in state funds. After three rounds of public comment, the rules to implement the program became effective in December 2017. The grant application guidelines and application form were posted to the program website and the announcement of the funding opportunity was widely released on December 21, 2017. The date to submit grant applications was originally publicized as March 6, 2018. **Ohio EPA is delaying the application submittal date until March 20, 2018**, to allow more time for applicants to prepare their proposals.

A public information session was held on Thursday January 25th at 10:00 a.m. at ODOT headquarters, 1980 W. Broad St., Columbus, OH 43223. Conference calls are also scheduled Thursday February 8 and Tuesday February 27 with program staff to take questions. This document summarizes questions of general applicability and interest received by February 7, with responses from AFV program staff. It will be updated as additional questions are received.

Vehicle Eligibility

Question 1: Are school buses eligible?

Response 1: Yes, if the bus has a Gross Vehicle Weight Rating (GVWR) of at least 26,000 pounds. Lighter weight school buses are not eligible.

Question 2: What proof do applicants need to submit to show that the vehicle is at least 26,000 pounds?

Response 2: For new vehicle purchases, when submitting the grant application, write in the Gross Vehicle Weight Rating (GVWR) of the proposed new vehicle into the Fleet Data Reporting Spreadsheet for Proposed New Vehicle Purchases. Ask the Vendor who is providing a quote for the proposed new vehicle to include the GVWR in the quote. Later, when successful grant recipients submit a request for reimbursement, the request must include sales receipt documentation showing that the purchased vehicle GVWR is 26,000 pounds or more.

For existing vehicle conversions, when submitting the grant application, write in the GVWR of the existing vehicle into the Fleet Data Reporting Spreadsheet. Upload documentation from when the existing vehicle was purchased, or a photo of the GVWR listed on the vehicle nameplate on the engine, or documentation that can be downloaded from the bar code on the vehicle nameplate, to show the GVWR. Later, when successful grant recipients submit a request for reimbursement, the request must include this documentation for the converted vehicle.

Question 3: Is there a form to show that the vehicle is operating in Ohio?

Response 3: The grant application must include a certification statement signed by the project authorizing agent attesting that of the total miles driven by the recipient or any employee or agent of the recipient, over half will be within the state of Ohio. The project scope description must also include an explanation of how and where the new or converted vehicle will be used and registered, and the technology or procedures the applicant will use to track and ensure that more than half the miles will be driven in Ohio. Later when requesting reimbursement, successful grant recipients will be asked to reaffirm this information. Ohio EPA has not yet developed a form for this purpose.

Question 4: Will there be tracking and reporting requirements for this program?

Response 4: Ohio EPA does not anticipate requiring quarterly or annual reports from grant recipients in this program. The grant contract will include the same requirements as the language in the grant application certification statement, requiring the recipient to maintain the new or converted vehicle for a period of five years from the date of delivery or installation, and providing Ohio EPA access to funded vehicles and equipment, based upon reasonable notice of a request for such access, within a five-year period from the date of execution of the grant contract.

Question 5: When can a vehicle be purchased if you are awarded a grant?

Response 5: Once the grant recipient has returned the grant contract, and the contract is signed and executed by the Ohio EPA director, a copy of the executed contract will be returned to the grant recipient with an authorization to initiate the purchase or schedule the conversion of the vehicle. Purchases made or work performed prior to the date of contract execution and authorization will not be reimbursable with grant funds.

Question 6: How long after applications are submitted will it take for grants to be awarded?

Response 6: As applications are reviewed, Ohio EPA will post to the program website whether an application has been deemed complete and eligible. Ohio EPA hopes to complete review of all applications, and secure the Ohio EPA Director's approval of the grant awards within 6-8 weeks after the initial application submittal date on March 20th. Award letters and contracts will then be sent to grant recipients. After signature by both parties and execution of the grant contract, which normally takes around a month, recipients will receive authorization to proceed with the project. Ohio EPA anticipates that project authorizations will be issued in late June or early July in most cases.

Question 7: **What are the specific types of equipment eligible for reimbursement and what proof of cost is needed?**

Response 7: Please review sections 4.2 and 4.3 of the grant application guidelines and work with the proposed vendor or engine converter to ensure that the engine or conversion process has been appropriately certified by US EPA or the California Air Resources Board. Specific links are provided in the application guidelines. Grant applications must include a detailed quote from the vendor or proposed converter, that breaks out the costs in sufficient detail that Ohio EPA can determine their eligibility. Vendors and converters are strongly encouraged to consult with Alan Harness at Ohio EPA about what to include in their quotes.

Some confusion exists about the terminology between US EPA or CARB **certified** engine configurations for new vehicles, and **exemptions** that US EPA or CARB have granted from the anti-tampering provisions of the federal Clean Air Act to alternative fuel conversion manufacturers who have demonstrated that the emission controls in the converted vehicle or engine will continue to function properly and that pollution will not increase as a result of the conversion. Applicants for conversions must show that a proposed conversion system is compliant with US EPA's Final Rule 40 CFR 85 and 86, as discussed in the grant application guidelines. Later, successful grant recipients requesting reimbursement will be required to demonstrate that the conversion system used was indeed compliant with the rule.

Question 8: **How long must the vehicle operate in Ohio once awarded a grant?**

Response 8: Five years. See Response 4 above.

Question 9: **Is destruction of the old vehicle or engine required?**

Response 9: This program does not require destruction of the old vehicle or engine.

Question 10: **How will applications be scored?**

Response 10: Because this is a one-time funding opportunity, grants will be reviewed and awarded on a first-come, first-served basis. Ohio EPA will review applications in the order received to determine completeness and eligibility, and award grants to eligible projects until the available funds have been allocated. As explained in the grant application guidelines, Ohio EPA will maintain the list of complete and eligible but unfunded applications for at least a year, and reserves the right to reallocate funds to the next applicant if one of the grantees does not make good progress implementing their project.

Question 11: **The grants will not pay for the new vehicle engine?**

Response 11: No. The statute that created this grant program defines adjusted purchase price to include only “the portion of the purchase price that is attributable to the parts and equipment used for the storage of alternative fuel, the delivery of alternative fuel to the motor, and the exhaust of gases from the combustion of alternative fuel.” The maximum grant award shall equal the lesser of 50% of the adjusted purchase price of the new AFV, or of the cost of the conversion parts and equipment, as applicable, or \$25,000. See Ohio Revised Code 122.076 (A)(5) and (C)(2), at <http://codes.ohio.gov/orc/122.076>

End of Responses to Questions