



Diesel Mitigation Trust Fund Grants 2021 Responses to Questions: Updated 7/26/21

Agency Contacts for this Program

Contact for financial questions: Carolyn Watkins, Office of Environmental Education, 614-644-3768, Carolyn.Watkins@epa.ohio.gov

Contact for technical questions: Alan Harness, Division of Air Pollution Control, 614-644-4838, Alan.Harness@epa.ohio.gov

Ohio EPA is offering the fourth application opportunity for the [Diesel Mitigation Trust Fund](#) grant program, with \$13.5 million in funding available for projects to replace or repower eligible off-road equipment in 26 Ohio priority counties. The [2021 Request for Applications](#) (grant application guidelines) was widely released on June 9, 2021, with an online application form available in Ohio EPA's [Customer Support Center](#). The deadline to submit applications is 3:00 p.m. on August 13, 2021.

Ohio EPA hosted webinars for interested grant applicants on June 9 and June 23, 2021. You can access the PowerPoint presentation and listen to the recorded webinar at [Environmental Education \(ohio.gov\)](#).

Answers to questions received at these webinars are presented below along with answers to questions Ohio EPA staff are providing to email and telephone inquiries. Ohio EPA will continue to update this document throughout the application period.

Question 1: When will applicants be notified of award status?

Response: We will announce awards in December, possibly earlier, depending upon the number of applications submitted.

Question 2: When you say replace off-road diesel equipment, what are acceptable replacements?

Response: For replacing or repowering eligible airport ground support equipment (GSE) and cargo handling equipment, all-electric is the only allowable replacement option. For replacing or repowering eligible freight switcher locomotives, several different fuel options are allowable, including new diesel, alternative fueled (e.g. CNG, propane, hybrid engines or generator sets) or all-electric.

Question 3: For airport GSE, what diesel engines are eligible? Would it be possible to replace diesel equipment that are newer than the original diesel engine age threshold with electric?

Response: Grant funds can only be used to replace Tier 0, Tier 1 or Tier 2 diesel powered airport GSE; and uncertified to certified to 3 g/bhp-hr or higher emissions spark ignition engine powered GSE; with new all-electric equipment. Grant funds cannot be used to replace Tier 4 diesel equipment.

Applicants who are unsure of the Tier rating of their existing equipment can find information at <https://dieselnet.com/standards/#na> or contact Alan Harness at Ohio EPA for assistance.

Question 4: For yard tractors and cargo handling equipment, are there specific model year or Tier restrictions for the old equipment?

Response: To be eligible for replacement or repower with grant funds, existing, operable diesel-powered cargo handling equipment must be replaced with comparable all-electric equipment. While there is no specific model year or Tier emissions eligibility requirement for the old equipment, replacing older, lower Tier equipment will be more cost effective at reducing emissions than replacing newer, current Tier equipment. To be eligible, tractors or other equipment must have been operating at least 1000 hours annually for the past two years, and be operating within priority counties at least 75% of the time. Please review sections 4.4 and 5.4 of the [2021 Request for Applications](#).

Question 5: Are forklifts eligible?

Response: Forklifts with greater than 8,000 pounds lift capacity are eligible in the port cargo handling equipment category, but we are primarily interested in funding those that work outdoors. We will be scrutinizing applications and following up with applicants to determine whether this is the case.

Question 6: Would diesel back-up generators being replaced by battery storage qualify?

Response: Back-up and stand-alone generators are not eligible for replacement with grant funds.

Question 7: Can you replace old, leased equipment with new purchased equipment if the old equipment is decommissioned?

Response: Leased equipment is not eligible for funding under this program.

Question 8: With airport equipment do you include the cost of the infrastructure in the proposal?

Response: Funding for the charging/fueling infrastructure is not eligible for funding this cycle.

Question 9: Can applicants get blank application documents so they can begin gathering the information needed before logging on?

Response: No, the software builds on the response to each question to provide the eligible components of the next questions to be answered. It's easy to save your work in the application and return to it later. The most important documents to assemble in advance are a price quote from a vendor for the equipment you plan to purchase; the fleet data spreadsheet for the old equipment (engine type, idling hours, etc.) and new equipment you plan to purchase; and a

demonstration of creditworthiness from for-profit applicants, usually by providing a letter of credit or a bond rating.

Question 10: Will this grant support hybrid (diesel/electric) cargo handling equipment?

Response: No, the VW settlement allows grant funds to be used only for all-electric GSE and cargo handling equipment. Hybrid switcher locomotives are eligible.

Question 11: Assuming we are awarded the grant, when is it permissible to start bidding?

Response: The grant funds cannot be used to reimburse any purchases or activities that were initiated before an authorization to purchase is issued from Ohio EPA to the grantee after the grant is awarded and the grant contract is signed and executed by both parties. Ohio EPA must certify to the VW trustee that all funded projects comply with state competitive purchasing laws, which apply differently to public sector and private sector projects. A formal public bid process may not be required in all cases, and Ohio EPA encourages the use of cooperative purchasing agreements.

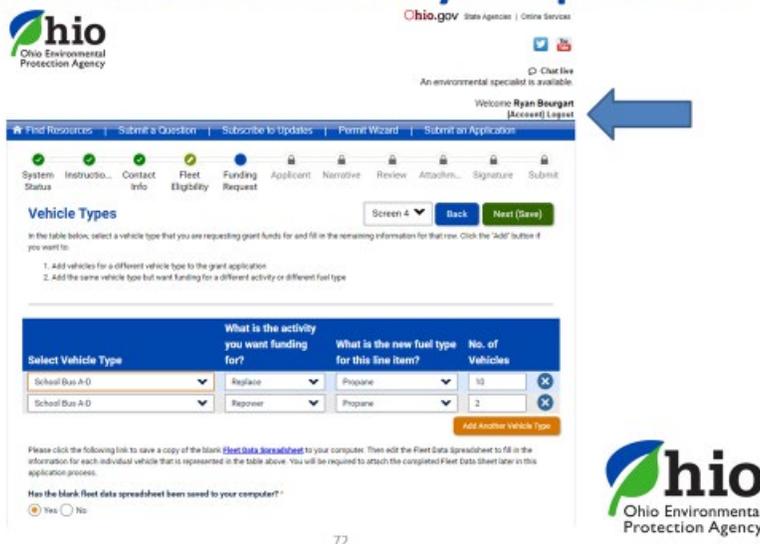
Question 12: Why can't new ultra-low NOx propane port equipment serve as replacements?

Response: The VW trust agreement limits the options for replacing port cargo handling equipment to all-electric.

Question 13: Where can we access application attachments?

Response: Application attachments can be accessed within the online application form in Ohio EPA's customer support center, and are also posted on the VW program website at <https://epa.ohio.gov/oeo/#1844010579-dmtf-2020-request-for-applications>. Applicants working within the online application form who have uploaded attachments can access those or edit the list by clicking on "account" as indicated by the blue arrow below:

Work in Progress: click on “account” to see the documents you uploaded



Ohio.gov State Agencies | Online Services

Chat live
An environmental specialist is available.

Welcome **Ryan Beugant**
(Account) Logout

Find Resources | Submit a Question | Subscribe to Updates | Permit Wizard | Submit an Application

System Status | Instructio... | Contact Info | Fleet Eligibility | Funding Request | Applicant | Narrative | Review | Attachm... | Signature | Submit

Vehicle Types

Screen 4 | Back | Next (Save)

In the table below, select a vehicle type that you are requesting grant funds for and fill in the remaining information for that row. Click the "Add" button if you want to:

1. Add vehicles for a different vehicle type to the grant application.
2. Add the same vehicle type but want funding for a different activity or different fuel type.

Select Vehicle Type	What is the activity you want funding for?	What is the new fuel type for this line item?	No. of Vehicles
School Bus A-D	Replace	Propane	10
School Bus A-D	Repower	Propane	2

Add Another Vehicle Type

Please click the following link to save a copy of the blank [Fleet Data Spreadsheet](#) to your computer. Then edit the Fleet Data spreadsheet to fill in the information for each individual vehicle that is represented in the table above. You will be required to attach the completed Fleet Data sheet later in this application process.

Has the blank fleet data spreadsheet been saved to your computer?
 Yes No

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Question 14: Can less than \$50,000 be requested for funding?

Response: The application software will limit grant requests to between \$50,000 and \$2 million. Smaller projects are encouraged to submit jointly or contact Ohio EPA staff with project specifics.

Question 15: Where do I find the list of previous grants to understand what has been requested in the past?

Response: At <https://www.epa.ohio.gov/oeef/#1844010486-ohio-grants-awarded-by-sector> and [DMTF-Awarded-Summary-2020.pdf \(ohio.gov\)](#).

Question 16: A port is tentatively planning to apply on behalf of a terminal operator. Would reimbursement percentages/guidelines be held to the “non-government” category?

Response: If the owner of the equipment is a private company, the non-government rates would apply. If the owner of the equipment is a public port authority under Ohio law, the government rate would be applicable.

Question 17: We are interested in replacing a 1998 Cat 990 Series II loader, currently used at our bulk terminal for bulk material handling. We estimate that this piece of equipment runs ~4,000 hours annually. Would this piece of equipment fall under “Forklifts and Port Cargo Handling Equipment” and therefore be limited to only all-electric repower/replacement?

Response: The loader would indeed fall under the port cargo handling equipment category where all-electric is the only allowable replacement fuel.

Question 18: Are ports having trouble finding all-electric options?

Response: We have funded a switcher locomotive operating within an Ohio port, and we are working with several prospective applicants in Ohio ports who are seeking funding to replace cranes, loaders and drayage trucks. They have identified available all-electric equipment options in these categories.

You might also investigate ODOT's Maritime Assistance program funding opportunities. The RFA and associated documentation is published on ODOT's website www.maritime.ohio.gov under the Maritime Assistance Program section of the page <http://www.dot.state.oh.us/Divisions/Planning/SPR/StatewidePlanning/Pages/MaritimeStrategy.aspx>.

Question 19: A company has terminal tractors that operate 100% of the time and are domiciled within an eligible county. The IRP registration for the tractors is based in another state, but the Ohio fees are paid. Is the company eligible for this RFA?

Response: Yes, this would be an eligible project. As part of the application process, the applicant should fill out the Fleet Data Spreadsheet (FDS) with information about the existing equipment and the proposed new equipment to be purchased. In Column "K" of the FDS, the applicant should enter *either* the Ohio vehicle registration number *or* the IRP registration number for each piece of old equipment that is registered for on-road operation. Column "K" can be left blank for tractors or equipment that is not registered for on-road operation. The FDS is downloadable [here](#) or within the online application software.

Question 20: I was not able to find anything titled "Grant Application Guidelines" on the website. Can you please direct me to that link?

Response: The application guidelines are labelled [2021 Request for Applications](#) on the website.

Question 21: The application seems to limit the grant funding for new switcher locomotives to 25% of the project cost and thus appears to require a greater local match than 25%. Is there any other path within the DMTF program that can be taken to increase funding that would decrease the local match?

Response: The program will fund engine repowers or replacement of the entire locomotive, with different allowable percentages depending upon the fuel choice selected for the replacement engine/locomotive, and whether the engine/locomotive is owned by a government entity or a non-government (for-profit or non-profit) entity. The VW settlement established the respective allowable percentages. Here is the language from the application guidelines:

Non-government owners of eligible freight switchers may request reimbursement from grant funds in the following amounts:

- Up to 40% of the cost of a repower with a new diesel or alternative fueled (e.g. CNG, propane, hybrid) engine(s) or generator sets, including the costs of installation of such engine(s).

- Up to 25% of the cost of a new diesel or alternative fueled (e.g., CNG, propane, hybrid) freightswitcher.
- Up to 75% of the cost of a repower with a new all-electric engine(s), including the costs of installation of such engine(s).
- Up to 75% of the cost of a new all-electric freight switcher.

Government owners of eligible freight switchers may request reimbursement from grant funds in the following amounts:

- Up to 75% of the cost of a repower with a new diesel or alternative fueled (e.g., CNG, propane, hybrid) engine(s) or generator sets, including the costs of installation of such engine(s).
- Up to 75% of the cost of a new diesel or alternative fueled (e.g., CNG, propane, hybrid) freight switcher.
- Up to 75% of the cost of a repower with a new all-electric engine(s), including the costs of installation of such engine(s).
- Up to 75% of the cost of a new all-electric freight switcher.

Thus, if the applicant is a for-profit entity seeking to replace an existing diesel switcher with a new diesel, CNG, propane, or hybrid switcher, the required match will be at least 75%. A lower match of at least 25% is required for projects seeking to replace an existing diesel switcher with an all-electric switcher. The application software should adjust the percentage allowable in the grant request based on the type of applicant (government or for profit) and by the fuel selected by the applicant for the new engine or new locomotive.

The application software will also limit the size of the grant to no more than \$2 million. Applicants for switcher locomotive projects where the \$2 million cap is less than the allowable percentage for the project are invited to provide us with a specific project budget in advance, so that we can advise you on how to submit the budget in the application.