



San Pedro Bay Ports Clean Air Action Plan

**For Immediate Release
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Ports Plan to Curtail Emissions from Ships Proposed incentives would improve air quality through use of low-sulfur fuel

The Long Beach and Los Angeles Boards of Harbor Commissioners will vote on March 24 on a bold plan to get vessel operators to switch to a cleaner-burning fuel within 40 miles of the ports of Long Beach and Los Angeles, in a joint program to improve regional air quality.

The proposal by the ports would employ incentives to encourage vessel operators to use cleaner-burning, low-sulfur fuel in their main propulsion engine. Sulfur oxides, which contribute to the formation of health-threatening soot or particulate matter, would be cut by as much as 11 percent and particulate matter by 9 percent, accelerating air quality improvements ahead of an already aggressive schedule set by the landmark San Pedro Bay Ports Clean Air Action Plan.

Cargo ships now generally use highly polluting bunker fuel, making ocean-going vessels the single largest source of air pollution at the two ports.

"We are moving full steam ahead in making our ports the cleanest and greenest in the world," said Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa. "By switching to clean-burning fuel we will cut air pollution and help Southern Californians breathe easier."

"This proposal would immediately improve the air quality of Southern California," said Long Beach Mayor Bob Foster. "It is a collaborative and creative effort to tackle the single largest source of pollution from these two ports and is a big step forward in our efforts to clean the air."

Under the incentive proposal, the ports would pay the difference between the price of bunker fuel and the more costly low-sulfur distillate fuel for vessel operators who make the fuel switch within at least 20 miles and out as far as 40 miles from the ports. Vessels will also be required to use low sulfur fuel in their auxiliary engines while at berth in the port complex. To qualify for the incentive program, the ships must also participate in the ports' voluntary Vessel Speed Reduction Program, limiting speeds to 12 knots during the switch to low-sulfur fuel. Most ships already participate in the speed reduction program, which also curbs emissions.

The incentive program is expected to cost the Port of Long Beach as much as \$9.9 million annually and \$8.6 million for the Port of Los Angeles. The staff proposal is for a one-year program, which would begin July 1 and expire June 30, 2009, unless extended by the two commissions.

The one-year incentive proposal is scheduled for consideration by both ports 9 a.m. March 24 at a special joint meeting of the Long Beach Board of Harbor Commissioners and the Los Angeles Board of Harbor Commissioners at Banning's Landing Community Center, 100 E. Water Street, Wilmington.

On July 1, 2009, a pending California Air Resources Board regulation would require the use of low-sulfur fuel in cargo vessels' main propulsion engines within 24 nautical miles of the state's coast. The ports' Clean Air Action Plan also calls for the ports to accelerate ship emission reductions by including lease-based limits on sulfur content in fuel. This is still planned. The incentive program is aimed at reducing more emissions on an even faster schedule.

"Bunker fuel is a major source of port-related air pollution, and this program has the potential to dramatically cut the use of bunker fuel in a hurry," said Long Beach Harbor Commission President Mario Cordero. "Most shipping lines will be able to start participating immediately."

"This is another example of how the two ports can and must work together to achieve dramatic results," said Los Angeles Harbor Commission President S. David Freeman. "And we'll continue to work together to implement these landmark clean air initiatives."

"This program is the direct result of a partnership between the ports and industry to reduce ship emissions," said John McLaurin, President of the Pacific Merchant Shipping Association. "The bunker fuel replacement initiative builds upon other successful voluntary emissions reduction programs around the ports including the vessel speed reduction program which has demonstrated a 90 percent compliance rate."

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