



Air Resources Board



Linda S. Adams
Secretary for
Environmental Protection

Mary D. Nichols, Chairman
1001 I Street • P.O. Box 2815
Sacramento, California 95812 • www.arb.ca.gov

Arnold Schwarzenegger
Governor

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Mail-Out # MSC 10-45

TO: All Interested Parties

SUBJECT: LOWER-EMISSION SCHOOL BUS PROGRAM MAIL-OUT --
ADDITIONAL FLEXIBILITY USING ASSEMBLY BILL 923 TO FUND
REPLACEMENT SCHOOL BUSES AND CLARIFICATION OF
ALTERNATIVE-FUELED TERMINOLOGY

This mail-out provides guidance to air districts and public school districts participating in the Lower-Emission School Bus Program (LESBP) that use Assembly Bill 923 (AB 923) funds for replacing school buses. Currently, the LESBP allows for replacement of only 1986 and older model year (MY) buses and 1987 and newer MY buses powered by a two-stroke engine.

AB 923 Funds Background

Funds provided through AB 923 (AB 923; Stats. 2004, Ch. 707) are a source of new school bus purchase funding. This legislation provided a mechanism for air districts to increase the motor vehicle registration fee surcharge by 2 dollars to fund projects in 4 different clean air categories, including the "new purchase of school buses pursuant to the Lower-Emission School Bus Program adopted by the state board."¹

AB 923 requires that the purchase of school buses with AB 923 funds be pursuant to the 2008 LESBP Guidelines. Previously, the Air Resources Board (ARB) expanded flexibility in the Guidelines with Mail-out #08-003 including:

- The dates in the LESBP Timetable do not apply to AB 923 funds.
- Air districts report expenditures of AB 923 funds, including AB 923 funds spent pursuant to the 2008 LESBP Guidelines, through a process established within the 2008 Carl Moyer Program Guidelines.
- On a case-by-case basis, an air district may use AB 923 funding to replace a school bus that has a California Highway Patrol (CHP) safety certification (CHP form 292) that has lapsed in the past. Generally, the bus must have a current

¹ Assembly Bill 923, Firebaugh, Chapter 707, Statutes of 2004. Available at http://www.leginfo.ca.gov/pub/03-04/bill/asm/ab_0901-0950/ab_923_bill_20040923_chaptered.html.

The energy challenge facing California is real. Every Californian needs to take immediate action to reduce energy consumption. For a list of simple ways you can reduce demand and cut your energy costs, see our website: <http://www.arb.ca.gov>.

California Environmental Protection Agency

CHP safety certification and the air district must make the determination that the school bus is being used regularly by the school district.

Additional Flexibility for Spending AB 923 Funds to Purchase New School Buses

In order to continue reducing the number of higher emitting buses on the road, ARB is again increasing flexibility for spending AB 923 funds to purchase a new school bus by revising thresholds set several years ago. The additions include:

- Increasing MY eligibility to MY 1993 and older buses,
- Allowing 1993 MY and older buses repowered with newer engines to be replaced, and,
- Giving Districts more discretion in determining the order in which buses may be replaced; the oldest buses do not need to be funded first. Buses with engines of MY 1993 and older would be eligible for replacement.

Clarification of “CNG” term

The 2008 LESBP Guidelines provides specific criteria for alternative-fueled replacement buses. Alternative-fueled buses may be powered by compressed or liquefied natural gas, liquefied petroleum gas (LPG or propane), electricity, methanol, ethanol fuels, fuel cells, or other advanced technologies that do not rely on diesel fuel, and has been certified by ARB. The 2008 LESBP Guidelines use the term “CNG” to discuss alternative-fueled buses. To clarify, the criteria set forth in the 2008 LESBP Guidelines for “CNG” replacement applies to all alternative-fueled buses.

Providing additional flexibility in AB 923 funding will further reduce children’s exposures to Particulate Matter and Oxides of Nitrogen emissions and prevent many of the associated health effects.

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If you have questions regarding this mail-out, please contact Janet Page, Air Pollution Specialist, at (916) 324-1988 or via email at jpage@arb.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

/s/

Robert H. Cross
Mobile Source Control Division

cc: Janet Page
Air Pollution Specialist
Mobile Source Control Division