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EPA grant will upgrade Cape May-Lewes Ferry With diesel clean air technology

(LEWES, Del., December 8, 2014) – The U.S Environmental Protection Agency today announced a \$975,000 Diesel Emission Reduction Act grant to the Delaware River and Bay Authority that will help bring new clean air technology to the Cape May-Lewes Ferry and reduce toxic air emissions.

“Cleaning up our air and ensuring people’s right to breathe healthy air is a priority for EPA,” said EPA Mid-Atlantic Regional Administrator Shawn M. Garvin. “The benefits of upgrading engines on the Cape May-Lewes ferry will help us combat climate change and benefit local air quality equivalent to removing emissions from 12 diesel tractor trailer trucks.”

The grant will support repowering the propulsion engines in the ferry boat M/V Delaware with EPA certified engines that are anticipated to annually reduce fuel use by 39,600 gallons and reduce annual carbon dioxide emissions by 443 tons. In addition, the upgrade will reduce nitrogen oxide (NOx) emissions by 39.7 tons and particulate matter (PM) emissions by nearly half a ton.

“We are grateful that the EPA recognized the importance of repowering MV Delaware, and the DERA grant will greatly assist that effort,” said Heath Gehrke, Director of Operations for the Cape May-Lewes Ferry. “The new engines will not only burn less fuel and be more efficient, but emissions will also be reduced by nearly 40 percent. In addition, we expect to save approximately \$130,000 per year in maintenance costs associated with old engines.” Gehrke added that the total cost of the new engines is approximately \$3.1 million.

The year-round Cape May-Lewes Ferry service is a critical part of the Mid-Atlantic regional transportation infrastructure, carrying about 800,000 passengers and 300,000 vehicles annually on a 14-mile route between Lewes, Del. and Cape May, N.J. For more than 40 years, the ferry has offered customers economical and efficient transportation.

(more)

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“This project is an excellent example of state and federal partners working together to find an effective way to improve air quality, reduce health risks and support the state’s ongoing efforts to reduce the effects of climate change,” said Delaware Governor Jack Markell. “The Delaware River Bay Authority deserves recognition for investing in these new engines. I thank our Congressional Delegation for their support in securing federal funding and to the EPA for providing the grant.”

“For every \$1 invested through the Diesel Emissions Reduction Act, we get over \$13 in health and economic benefits in return,” said Sen. Tom Carper, who co-authored the Diesel Emissions Reduction Act. “The good thing about diesel engines is that they last a long time, and the bad thing about diesel engines is that they last a long time. Retrofitting or replacing older diesel engines can dramatically reduce harmful emissions but, despite the long-term economic benefits of these upgrades, there are few direct and immediate economic incentives. Programs like the Diesel Emissions Reduction Act help encourage critical investment in updating our diesel fleets so they are cleaner and friendlier for our environment. The changes made to these ferry engines will be a breath of fresh air for the folks that live here in Lewes and in New Jersey.”

DERA funds are used to clean up the legacy fleet of diesel engines that were produced before more recent environmental standards. The DERA grant program is intended to help solve some complex air quality issues in port communities.

For more information on the DERA funding assistance program and other grant opportunities, visit <http://www.epa.gov/cleandiesel/prgnational.htm> .

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