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IOWA NORTHERN RAILWAY AWARDED GRANT FOR DIESEL EXHAUST REDUCTION PROJECT

Windsor Heights -- The Iowa Environmental Protection Commission approved funding for a diesel exhaust reduction project for the Iowa Northern Railway Company of Cedar Rapids at its October 20th meeting.

Iowa Northern Railway will be reimbursed \$310,000 to remove an engine from a locomotive and convert it to a rail "slug." The slug will be powered via electrical output from a "mother" diesel engine, which will also be wired for the project. A slug increases the number of traction motors available to the locomotive, increasing both the pulling and braking power. Diesel exhaust from the previous operating engine will be completely eliminated. The railway will provide a \$50,000 match.

The grant is funded from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 and managed by the Department of Natural Resources Air Quality Bureau. The program targets the reduction of exhaust from diesel engines.

"Removing the emissions of an old diesel railroad engine while continuing to utilize its power is an excellent use of resources." said Air Quality Bureau Chief Catharine Fitzsimmons.

Grant applications were judged on projected exhaust reductions, cost-effectiveness, cost match, and area of operation. Pollution reduction estimates combined potential

exhaust from fine particles, nitrogen oxides, hydrocarbons, and carbon dioxide using projection calculations from the Environmental Protection Agency.

Nitrogen oxides and hydrocarbons contribute to the formation of ground level ozone in the presences of sunlight and heat. Both ozone and fine particles reduce lung function and increase respiratory symptoms.

Diesel exhaust also contains 40 known cancer-causing substances including benzene, 1,3-butadiene, formaldehyde, acetaldehyde and acrolein. Those most vulnerable to the effects of pollution are children because their lungs are still developing, the elderly, and even healthy adults who work outdoors in areas where they are regularly exposed to diesel exhaust.

More information about the RIDE grant program and diesel exhaust reduction strategies is available at <http://www.iowadnr.gov/air/RIDE/index.html>.