# Diesel Exhaust Fact Sheet

Diesel exhaust is a mixture of thousands of chemicals, including 1-nitropyrene (1-NP). These chemicals are released as gases or particles (such as black soot) from vehicles and machinery that run on diesel fuel. Vehicles that run on biodiesel fuel produce similar exhaust.

## Diesel exhaust comes from

- On-road vehicles that run on diesel fuel, such as semi-trailer trucks, light-duty trucks, and some buses and passenger cars.
- Diesel-powered freight and passenger trains, and cargo and cruise ships.
- Heavy-duty equipment, such as bulldozers and tractors, used for construction, agriculture, landscaping, mining, and similar types of work.
- Diesel-powered generators.

## Possible health concerns

Diesel exhaust:

- Can make asthma worse and contribute to other respiratory diseases, like chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD).
- May harm the lungs and lower resistance to respiratory infections.
- May make allergic reactions to dust, pollen, and other allergens worse.
- Can make existing heart conditions worse.
- Can increase cancer risk.

## Possible ways to reduce exposure

- When walking, riding a bike, or exercising outdoors, choose areas away from roadways whenever possible, or side streets with less traffic. Avoid busy highways and paths near train routes.
- When in heavy traffic, keep vehicle windows closed and put the air on recirculate (look for this symbol or check your manual: 🎈).
- Always start and operate diesel engines in a well-ventilated area.
- If you have a diesel car or truck, don’t idle inside garages, especially garages attached to your home.
- Install backup and portable diesel-powered generators well away from your home, so that exhaust does not come in through open windows or doors.
- If possible, use a high-efficiency filter in your home’s central heating and air system.
- Consider buying a portable air cleaner (or “air purifier”) that can remove small particles from the air in your home (see below).
- Because chemicals from diesel exhaust can collect in dust:
  - Wash your and your child’s hands often, especially before preparing or eating food.
  - Clean your floors regularly, using a wet mop or HEPA vacuum if possible, and use a damp cloth to dust.
- Report diesel trucks in California if they are:
  - Idling where “No idling” signs are posted, or idling for more than five minutes.
  - Not following designated truck routes.

Call 1-800-363-7664 or fill out the form at this link: [www.arb.ca.gov/enf/complaints/icv.htm](http://www.arb.ca.gov/enf/complaints/icv.htm).

For more information:


Diesel exhaust in California: [ww2.arb.ca.gov/resources/overview-diesel-exhaust-and-health](http://ww2.arb.ca.gov/resources/overview-diesel-exhaust-and-health)