

ALBANY SOUTH END COMMUNITY AIR QUALITY STUDY



Department of
Environmental
Conservation

High-Emitting Vehicles (HEVs)

October 2019

What are HEVs?

HEVs are diesel-fueled vehicles, such as trucks and buses, that emit much higher concentrations (“peaks”) of traffic-related air pollution (TRAP).

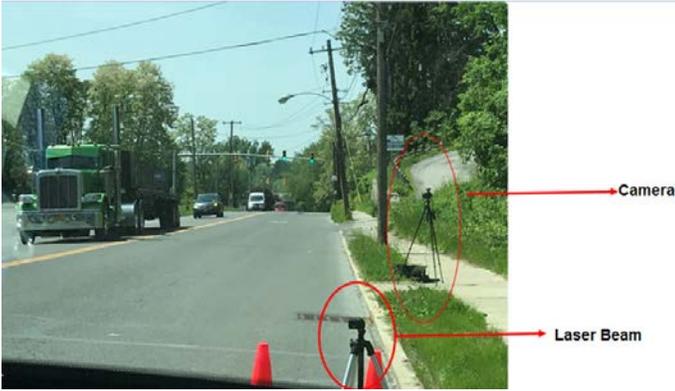
- HEVs are a small number of vehicles and release more pollutants than other types of vehicles.
- Portable monitors show a temporary increase in TRAP when HEVs travel by these monitors.
- HEV emissions are similar along high-traffic streets in the South End, but are highest around Ezra Prentice due to the types of vehicles traveling along this street (see figure 1).
- Reducing emissions from HEV vehicles would have the greatest benefit in improving neighborhood air quality.
- DEC and other agencies are taking steps to reduce traffic pollutants, because outdoor air affects indoor air.



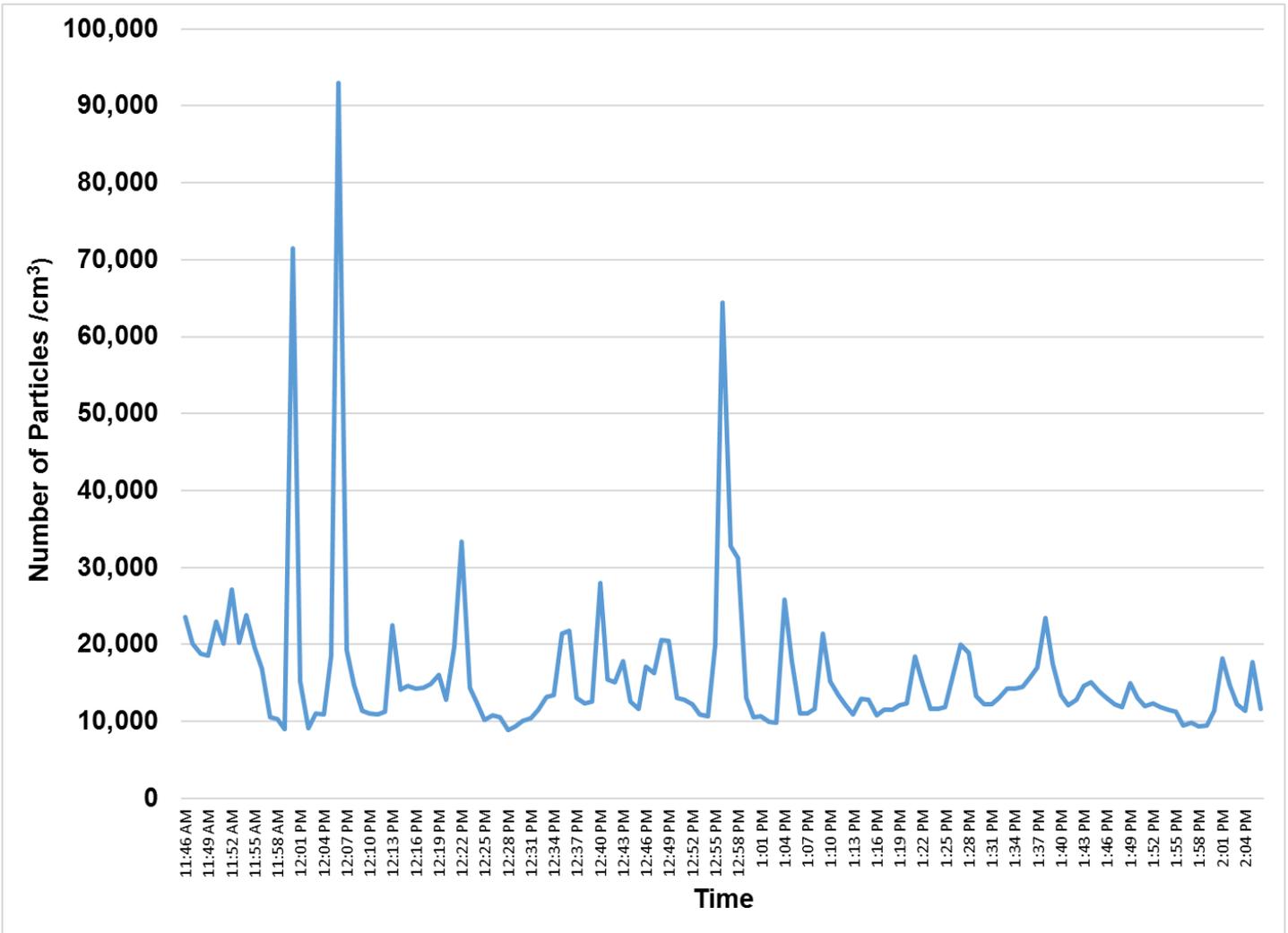
Figure 1. Location of High-Emitting Vehicles Identified during Portable Monitoring

How were HEVs and TRAP identified?

- DEC used a special system involving a camera placed along the side of the road next to the portable monitoring station. An instrument with a laser beam was placed a short distance away. The laser beam projected across both lanes of traffic and triggered the camera to take a picture of every vehicle that passed the mini-monitoring station.



DEC looked at the photos for each brief peak concentration of TRAP to identify the type of HEVs passing the portable monitoring station.



What are DEC and state and local partners doing to reduce TRAP exposures?

Reducing traffic pollution

- DEC is working with identified vehicle fleets to evaluate ways fleets can reduce emissions (removing or retrofitting specific high-emitting vehicles).
- DEC and DOT are making \$20 million available from the Volkswagen settlement and other resources to fund clean trucks statewide, with a focus on environmental justice communities like the South End. DEC has allocated an additional \$52.4 million for future projects to replace transit, school, and paratransit buses statewide.
- DEC continues to conduct periodic enforcement checks on South Pearl Street and impose fines on trucks and buses with high emissions.
- DOT has reclassified four roads within the Port of Albany. This change will make the routes within the port eligible for transportation grants.
- DOT is committed to providing technical support to the City of Albany, including direct engineering assistance, in support of the city's continued assessment of South Pearl Street and potential alternative routes for truck traffic.
- The City of Albany's Mayor's Office is helping to coordinate the voluntary rerouting of frequent truck traffic by several businesses in the South End, and has directed the Albany Department of General Services (DGS) to prohibit its vehicles from using South Pearl Street other than for regularly scheduled solid waste pickup and street cleaning. DGS will also purchase a street-cleaning vacuum (not a sweeper) to help reduce road dust.
- DEC, the Mayor's Office, and the Albany Housing Authority (AHA) are leading a workgroup to develop mitigation strategies and ensure implementation of overall approaches. The workgroup will evaluate the effectiveness of roadside barriers, such as green walls, where appropriate.

Reducing air pollutants indoors

- AHA is working to minimize residents' exposure to airborne pollutants by providing professionally installed window air conditioners at Ezra Prentice, beginning with residences closest to South Pearl Street and moving outward.
- AHA is also evaluating other strategies, such as the effectiveness of central air conditioning.
- AHA will conduct door-to-door advocacy with healthcare partners to increase awareness and education related to indoor air quality.

Where Can I Find More Information?

- Read the full Albany South End Air Quality Study at: <https://on.ny.gov/southendstudy>.

Next Steps

- Evaluate the effectiveness of reduction strategies by continuing to monitor particulate matter and other TRAP in the Albany South End community.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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