
NEWS RELEASE

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Ministry of Environment

LEGISLATION INTRODUCED TO CUT VEHICLE EMISSIONS

VICTORIA – British Columbia is taking further action on climate change with the introduction of the Greenhouse Gas Reduction (Vehicle Emissions Standards) Act, which will save consumers money while reducing emissions, Environment Minister Barry Penner announced today.

“Reducing tailpipe emissions from family vehicles, such as cars, SUVs and light-duty trucks, will help curb our impact on the environment,” said Penner. “More efficient vehicles will also translate into significant fuel cost savings for British Columbians, and will provide more flexibility to make environmentally conscious choices without compromising vehicle performance, reliability or safety.”

The new legislation will put into law the 2008 throne speech commitment to set vehicle greenhouse gas (GHG) emission standards equivalent to those laid out in California’s 2004 regulation. These standards will reduce GHG emissions by 30 per cent relative to current models. This will result in a reduction of 600,000 tonnes of GHG emissions annually by 2016.

Seventeen U.S. states have adopted or are in the process of adopting the California model, while six others are actively considering it. Twelve out of Canada’s 13 provinces and territories support California tailpipe greenhouse gas standards, with Quebec now in the process of making final revisions to its draft regulations. Together, these states and provinces have a combined population of 176 million and represent nearly half of all new car sales in the U.S. and Canada.

Under the act, automakers’ fleets of family vehicles will not be allowed to exceed pre-determined fleet-average GHG emission standards. The “fleet-average” approach will allow manufacturers to keep selling vehicles that exceed the allowed emissions – provided they sell enough low-emission vehicles for their fleets to meet the new average standards. This approach ensures that consumers will continue to have the choice of the full range of vehicles available today.

The act also provides B.C. with authority to require larger vehicle manufacturers to include a percentage (or set number) of zero emission vehicles in their fleets per year. This requirement will be based on California’s approach, and will target both GHG emissions and air pollutants.

The Greenhouse Gas Reduction (Vehicle Emissions Standards) Act provides authority to establish additional elements of the California regime by regulation. The tailpipe GHG emission standards under this act will come into effect when California starts to implement its regulations.

To learn more about B.C.’s climate change initiatives, please visit the Ministry of Environment and the Climate Action Secretariat websites at www.gov.bc.ca/env and www.climateactionsecretariat.gov.bc.ca.

For all the details on this and other new legislation, please visit www.leg.bc.ca/38th4th/votes/progress-of-bills.htm.

1 backgrounder(s) attached.

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