



Our Children's Earth Foundation | 100 First Street, Suite 100-367, San Francisco, CA 94105

## NEWS RELEASE

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### **NEW SURVEY FINDS MUNI DISPATCHING DOZENS OF OLD, UNHEALTHY, UNRELIABLE DIESEL BUSES DAILY**

*- MUNI rider education campaign launched to distribute of thousands of mock "Fast Passes" in April to educate riders about the health hazards of old diesel buses -*

A groundbreaking survey released today by a public health and environmental coalition found that more than 1 out of 3 MUNI diesel buses on the streets are beyond the "useful life" of a transit bus and should be retired. The survey also found that dozens of emergency-only "Reserve" buses are in fact being dispatched regularly, and that MUNI has failed to disclose that a number of 20-year-old "Gross Polluters" are still in the fleet and on the streets.

"MUNI riders should be outraged that so many of the buses we rely on to get around town are polluting the air we breathe and the San Francisco we love," said John Rizzo with the San Francisco Bay Chapter of the Sierra Club.

The MUNI Bus Survey examined 488 individual "busruns", covering 45 of the 54 diesel bus routes in San Francisco. Each "busrun" - a bus with a driver leaving the busyard to begin its assigned daily route - was documented by an investigator over the course of a week last month at each of the city's two major diesel busyards. Among the survey's key findings:

- 39% (189/488) of the busruns surveyed were made by buses that are past the 12 year "useful life" of a transit bus and are unhealthy, unreliable, and should be retired.
- 18% (88/488) of the busruns surveyed - nearly 1 out of 5 - were made by buses that have supposedly been placed on "Reserve" status, to be used only in case of emergency. So-called "Reserve" buses were in use every single day of the survey.
- 24% (21/88) of the busruns made by "Reserve" buses were actually made by old diesel buses first placed into service in 1984, which MUNI claims to have already "eliminated."
- 78% (35/45) of the Bus Routes covered in the survey were serviced by one or more old, dirty diesel buses. This is a majority of the 54 diesel Bus Routes MUNI runs citywide.

"Because of the clear connection between toxic diesel fumes and lung diseases such as asthma, these dirty diesel buses are a health hazard for riders and drivers," added Linda Weiner, Director of Air Quality Advocacy for the American Lung Association of San Francisco and San

Mateo Counties. "It's embarrassing that in a city as progressive as San Francisco, the garbage trucks, many of which run on alternative fuel, are cleaner than many of the city buses."

In addition to releasing the new survey, the Dump Diesel Coalition - which also includes Our Children's Earth, Greenaction, Bayview Hunters Point Community Advocates, and other groups - unveiled a mock MUNI Fast Pass that will be distributed to thousands of MUNI riders in April. The "Toxic Pass" warns bus riders about the hazards of old diesels and encourages them to call MUNI General Manager Michael Burns with their concerns.

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