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Press release | 11.10.2018

Diesel is finally considered carcinogenic for workers

Occupational health

In May 2016, the European Commission proposed to extend the scope of Directive 2004/37/EC to review occupational exposure limits for carcinogens and mutagens or to include new ones. Until now, the Council has refused to include emissions from diesel engines within the scope of the Directive.

This request from the Greens/EFA group has finally led to a compromise and the final text of the agreement sets a limit of 0.05 mg/m3 for exposure from diesel engine emissions for 8 hours.

This limit will enter into force in most sectors two years after the end of the transposition period of the Directive, either in 2023, with the exception of mines and tunnels, for which it will apply five years after the end of the transposition period, or theoretically in 2026.

Jean Lambert MEP member of the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs for the Greens/EFA group comments:

"The European Parliament has forced governments to recognise the carcinogenic nature of diesel engine emissions. This is an undeniable victory for the health of workers across Europe. Every year in the EU, 3 million workers are exposed to diesel pollution through the course of their professional activities.

"This is also a victory in our fight against the myth of clean diesel. While the damage diesel does to citizens' health is becoming more well known, the consequences for workers' health has stayed off the radar, largely under pressure from corporate lobbies. Thanks to this agreement, citizens and workers are now considered equal in the face of the dangers of diesel exhaust.

"This text was amended to clarify the limit as 0.05 mg/m3 for exposure from diesel engines."

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Responsible MEPs



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