



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT:

Anne Blair, SACE, 404-373-5832 x2; anne@cleanenergy.org

Rebecca Watts Hull, Mothers & Others for Clean Air: 404-313-1779
rwattshull@gaconservancy.org

WHAT: Press Event/Photo Op –Diesel Air Quality Retrofit Demonstration

WHERE: University of Georgia’s Continuing Education Center (GA Center) at 1197 S. Lumpkin Street, Athens, Georgia.

TIME: 11:00AM

WHO: Representatives from the Environmental Protection Agency, Region 4, City of Athens, University of Georgia, Washington County, Southern Alliance for Clean Energy, Mothers & Others for Clean Air, Clean Air Task Force

Clean Diesel Stimulus Grant Awardees Host Workshop and Air Quality Demonstration

ATHENS (February 22, 2009) – Today, Southern Alliance for Clean Energy (SACE), Mothers & Others for Clean Air (MOCA) and the University of Georgia (UGA) are hosting a workshop and air quality demonstration at the University of Georgia Continuing Education Center. The event is being held as part of a \$1.7 million stimulus grant from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to Athens-Clarke County (ACC), University of Georgia (UGA), and Washington County to install pollution control devices (retrofits) on diesel transit buses and municipal vehicles. MOCA and SACE are leading the project’s education and outreach efforts.

The EPA grant is funding retrofits for ACC’s transit and fire and emergency vehicles, UGA’s transit buses, and a variety of municipal diesel vehicles in Washington County. The University of Georgia installed the first retrofit on a garbage truck last week. It was retrofit with a flow thru filter, which is recognized by the Environmental Protection Agency to be a level 2 pollution control device, achieving at least a 50% reduction in particulate matter emissions.

Workshop organizers with scientists from the national environmental research and advocacy group Clean Air Task Force will use a monitoring device to demonstrate reduced levels of harmful black carbon soot emissions by testing tailpipe pollution before and after the retrofit of a UGA garbage truck with a filter.

“The demonstration will show how effective the technology is at reducing pollution from the truck, said Anne Blair, clean diesel program manager with the Southern Alliance for Clean Energy. “Based on preliminary testing, the truck’s diesel soot levels are approximately cut by half resulting in measurable improvements in air quality for the communities where these vehicles operate.”

The Clean Air Task Force has, for the past eight years, conducted multiple field studies investigating the effectiveness of diesel emissions controls in reducing exposure to particulate air pollution in and around trucks, buses, and heavy equipment. Understanding the technology’s operation is critical to determining the most effective types of retrofits available for specific applications.

PRESS RELEASE: Feb. 22 Clean Diesel Stimulus Grant Awardees Host Workshop and Air Quality Demonstration

Page 2 of 2

"We've primarily demonstrated diesel particle filters around the country since 2002 and we've found them to virtually eliminate toxic diesel soot," said CATF senior scientist Bruce Hill. "Because these filters reduce black carbon soot, they are a win-win for the Georgia citizens by helping to improve health and at the same time reduce atmospheric warming."

When completed, the project is expected to result in the reduction of 0.50 tons of particulate matter per year, as well as 13 tons of hydrocarbons and 91 tons of carbon monoxide. "With 27 Georgia counties failing federal standards for fine particulates, we need to take every step possible to reduce emissions," said Rebecca Watts Hull, director of Mothers & Others for Clean Air. "Today's workshop is an opportunity for fleets and community members in areas that violate or are close to violating federal air quality standards to learn about clean diesel solutions."

Diesel soot contains particulate matter, black carbon, sulfur dioxide, nitrogen oxides and more than 40 hazardous air pollutants (HAPs) – all of which are dangerous to human health, especially to the developing bodies of children. The fine particles in diesel soot are so small that they penetrate deep into the lungs and get into the blood stream. Breathing diesel exhaust can contribute to both chronic and acute human health problems such as asthma attacks, reduced lung function, lung disease, cancer and even premature death. Analysis based on EPA's most recent National Air Toxics Assessment data concluded that diesel exhaust poses a cancer risk that is 7 times greater than all 181 air toxics studied combined.

In addition to the workshop and demonstration, the Environmental Protection Agency, Region 4 will be holding a press conference highlighting the project.

###

Mothers & Others for Clean Air is a partnership of six health and environmental organizations and institutions dedicated to educating the public about the health effects of air pollution and engaging Georgians in advocacy for cleaner air. <http://www.mothersandothersforcleanair.org/>

Southern Alliance for Clean Energy is a nonprofit organization that promotes responsible energy choices that create global warming solutions and ensure clean, safe, and healthy communities throughout the Southeast. www.cleanenergy.org

Clean Air Task Force is a nonprofit organization dedicated to reducing atmospheric pollution through research, advocacy and private sector collaboration. www.catf.us