

ENVIRONMENTAL NEWS

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EPA DENIES ONE-YEAR EXTENSION OF 1975 AUTO EMISSION STANDARDS

William D. Ruckelshaus, Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, today denied a one-year extension of the legal requirement for 1975 auto emission standards that had been requested by five companies.

Ruckelshaus said the companies had failed to produce sufficient evidence required under the Clean Air Act to justify such a postponement of the standards.

"We have concluded that although auto manufacturers demonstrated difficulties in their efforts to reduce exhaust pollutants, they have not established that the technology does not exist. Impressive progress has been achieved in controlling auto emissions by a variety of control systems employing catalysts. Our analysis of all data suggests the technology may well be available for the 1975 cars to meet these standards," Ruckelshaus said.

"We recognize that it may require financial commitments by auto makers to catalyst suppliers before all testing has been completed, but it appears that such commitments, already taken by one major auto company, are necessary to achieve the air pollution control objectives mandated by the 1970 Clean Air Act."

The Clean Air Act calls for a 90 percent reduction in emissions of hydrocarbons and carbon monoxide in 1975 model autos compared with emissions from 1970 models.

The Act also authorizes the EPA Administrator to grant a one-year suspension of the 1975 standards if after hearings and examination of evidence he determines that the suspension is

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essential to the public interest or public health and welfare; that the applicant for a waiver has made good faith efforts to meet the 1975 standards; and that the applicant has established that effective control technology is not available or has not been available long enough to achieve compliance with the standards.

Five companies applied for the one-year suspension prior to EPA hearings that began April 10. They were Volvo, Incorporated, of Sweden; International Harvester; General Motors; Ford; and Chrysler. A sixth company, American Motors, also filed for a suspension after the hearings began, but its application was not included in today's decision, and a separate hearing will be scheduled soon on its request. Any other company seeking a suspension must submit a formal application with supporting data.

A number of other auto companies and makers of emission control systems, as well as public interest groups, testified during the three weeks of hearings. A total of 2,926 pages of testimony were received and are on file at EPA headquarters for public inspection.

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