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ENGINE MANUFACTURERS INSIST AIR TOXICS STUDY NEEDS MAJOR IMPROVEMENTS, MISLEADS PUBLIC

CHICAGO (Feb. 18, 2000) -- The Engine Manufacturers Association (EMA) insists major revisions are needed to improve the accuracy and usefulness of the Multiple Air Toxics Exposure Study (MATES II) before its final release by the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD). "Our main concern is that the public will be misled," said Glenn Keller, EMA Executive Director. "The methods used in the draft MATES II report incorrectly estimate cancer risks and describe them as 'average risks' to the public. That's simply not true." Scientific researchers have identified significant uncertainties and errors in the way South Coast staff determined the health risks associated with toxic air contaminants in the report. "The MATES II report inaccurately estimates ambient levels of diesel particulates since the calculation is based on outdated and incomplete data from the early 80's," cited Keller. "In addition, the unit risk factor (URF) for diesel particulate that drives the results of the study is an invalid measure of the potency of diesel particulate. What's more, risk levels reported as 'average' in the report are based on hypothetical, maximum predicted, outdoor exposure concentrations and not real-life exposure levels." EMA advocates major revisions to the MATES II report before its official release, including using up-to-date data on the role of diesel particulates, realistic exposure estimates, and inclusion of an analysis of the uncertainties inherent in the results. "MATES II is a first effort - one that needs major improvement if it is to be truly useful to the public and the SCAQMD," stated Keller. "The public deserves to receive information that is as accurate as possible when it comes to their health. And EMA is committed to working with the SCAQMD and the scientific community in providing this level of accuracy."

EMA is a trade association representing worldwide manufacturers of internal combustion engines for all applications except passenger cars and aircraft. The EMA continues to work with government and industry stakeholders to help the nation achieve its goals of cleaner fuels, more efficient engines and cleaner air. For more information contact Anne Rukavina at (312) 644-6610 x3393 or visit our Web site at www.engine-manufacturers.org.