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## AmeriScan: February 12, 2007

- [NGOs Join California Fight Against Polluting Ships](#)

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### **NGOs Join California Fight Against Polluting Ships**

**SACRAMENTO, California**, February 12, 2007 (ENS) - The Natural Resources Defense Council, NRDC, and the Coalition for Clean Air have decided to join an ongoing legal battle to defend a state regulation limiting air pollution caused by ships docking at California's ports.

The organizations last week petitioned the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of California to intervene for the defense in a lawsuit by the Pacific Merchant Shipping Association challenging a regulation adopted by the California Air Resources Board in 2005.

The Auxiliary Engine Rule requires emission reductions from ship auxiliary engines used within 24 nautical miles of the California coast. Auxiliary engines generate electricity that is used to provide lighting, cooling and on-board power for navigation equipment.

"Air pollution from California ports will increase significantly as maritime trade grows over the next decade. That's going to put our health at risk and undermine the hard work we've done to clean up the skies of Southern California," said Melissa Lin Perrella, an attorney with NRDC's Air Quality Program.

Emissions from the freight transport industry in California cause 2,400 premature deaths, 360,000 lost workdays, and more than one million school absences annually, the groups claim.

The Air Resources Board estimates that between 2007 and 2020 the new rule will reduce particulate emissions by more than 23,000 tons, nitrogen oxides by 15,000 tons, and sulfur oxides

by 200,000 tons - preventing some 520 premature deaths.

"Many of the ships calling in California run on some of the dirtiest fuels in the world," said Thomas Plenys, research and policy manager for the Coalition for Clean Air. "This important rule requires shipping companies to clean up their act when they are near California's coastline."

The Auxiliary Engine Rule requires vessel operators to limit the emissions from auxiliary engines to levels similar to those registered when 5,000 part per million sulfur fuel is used. The rule allows the Air Resources Board to require use of even cleaner fuels by 2010.

The Auxiliary Engine Rule is one of the first in a series of rules that the Air Resources Board plans to adopt to reduce pollution from marine vessels, including rules that will reduce emissions from marine vessel main engines and that will require ships to plug in to shore power instead of running their engines while docked.

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