



THE UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT of JUSTICE

United States Attorney's Office
District of Oregon

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Lane County Diesel Repair Shop and Shop Owner Plead Guilty to Clean Air Act Violations

Shop and shop owner agree to pay criminal fines and complete terms of probation

EUGENE, Ore.—A Lane County, Oregon, diesel repair shop and its owner pleaded guilty today in federal court to knowingly and intentionally tampering with pollution monitoring devices on at least 184 vehicles in violation of the Clean Air Act.

Diesel & Offroad Authority, LLC, located in Veneta, Oregon, and its owner and operator, Christopher Paul Kaufman, 38, a resident of Veneta, pleaded guilty to tampering with pollution monitoring devices.

As part of their plea agreements, Diesel & Offroad Authority and Kaufman have agreed to pay \$150,000 each in criminal fines and serve three years terms of probation.

“Diesel & Offroad Authority and its owner put profits over our community’s health and safety by amplifying diesel engines’ noxious fumes,” said Nathan J. Lichvarcik, Chief of the U.S. Attorney’s Office Eugene and Medford Branch Offices. “We will continue working closely with our partners at EPA to hold accountable businesses that violate our nation’s environmental protection laws.”

“The defendants in this case illegally tampered with the onboard diagnostics systems and removed the emissions control components from hundreds of diesel trucks,” said Special Agent in Charge Lance Ehrig of the Environmental Protection Agency’s Criminal Investigation Division (EPA CID) in Oregon. “The pollution that results from vehicle emissions can lead to serious health conditions and has been linked to increased respiratory disease and childhood asthma. This guilty plea demonstrates that EPA will vigorously prosecute those who violate laws designed to protect our communities from harmful air pollution.”

According to court documents, beginning in at least 2018 and continuing through 2022, Diesel & Offroad authority tampered with and disabled emissions control systems of at least 184 diesel vehicles in violation of the Clean Air Act. Diesel & Offroad Authority charged its customers approximately \$2,300 each for the emissions modifications and collected more than \$378,000 for the unlawful services over an approximately four-year period.

As owner of Diesel & Offroad Authority, Kaufman oversaw and participated in the illegal modification of vehicles, including by procuring various automotive parts used in the process and engaging in and directing employees in the removal of emissions control equipment.

On March 12, 2024, Diesel & Offroad Authority and Kaufman were charged by federal criminal information with violating the Clean Air Act by tampering with pollution monitoring devices.

Diesel & Offroad Authority and Kaufman will be sentenced on July 17, 2024.

This case was investigated by EPA CID. It is being prosecuted by William M. McLaren, Assistant U.S. Attorney for the District of Oregon.

If you witness an environmental event that may lead to an immediate threat to human health or the environment, please call 9-1-1. After alerting local emergency authorities, please also report incidents to the EPA's Report a Violation website (<https://echo.epa.gov/report-environmental-violations>) or by calling the National Response Center at 1-800-424-8802.

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